

The
**AUTOMATIC
LETTER WRITER
& DICTATION SYSTEM**

HF
5726
L52a
Leffingwell, ed.
The automatic
letterwriter and

Southern Branch
of the
University of California
Los Angeles

Form L-1

HF
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THE AUTOMATIC LETTERWRITER AND DICTATION SYSTEM

EDITED BY W. H. LEFFINGWELL
AUTHOR OF "SCIENTIFIC OFFICE MANAGEMENT"

BETTER LETTERS AT LOWER COST—HOW TO USE PARAGRAPHS TO CLOSE SALES
—EASIER WAYS FOR ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS—HOW TO GET THE MAIL
OUT MORE QUICKLY—REDUCING OFFICE EXPENSE BY AUTOMATIC
CORRESPONDENCE ROUTINE—MECHANICAL DEVICES THAT
HELP TO SPEED UP AUTOMATIC DICTATION—
OPENERS AND CLOSERS THAT MAKE PARA-
GRAPH LETTERS MORE PERSONAL

THE AUTOMATIC LETTERWRITER
AND DICTATION SYSTEM



A. W. SHAW COMPANY
CHICAGO NEW YORK
LONDON
40257

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BRUNSWICK & COMPANY
HARDWARE
104 BROADWAY

Chicago
July 17, 1918

C. W. Shepherd,
217 National Avenue,
Stanford, Ohio.

Dear Sir:

It is a pleasure to comply with your request of July 15. We are sending you today a copy of our price list, in order that it may reach you promptly.

For a complete description of the gauge take a careful look through the circular which I am enclosing. It will help you to decide exactly what fits your needs, and will give you thorough information about quality, prices and the satisfaction felt by representative users.

Thank you for your order of the 15th.

I have seen that your goods were carefully packed and shipped. They should reach you now in two days. Let me know if they do not come promptly, or if you have any questions to ask about them. I am confident that you will be thoroughly satisfied with this shipment. I am therefore looking forward to other orders from you in the near future. How may we serve you further?

Feel assured that we always want to do everything we can to give our customers complete satisfaction.

We find on looking through the records of our shipping department that the goods left the wareroom on the 10th. Therefore, it was hardly possible for them to have reached you at the time you wrote to us. If, however, they have not arrived by the time you receive this letter, will you please let us know at once, so that we may duplicate the shipment to you and start a tracer?

We are looking forward to receiving your check in settlement of your account for last month, which you say you will send next week.

We want to thank you for the interest you have already shown and will spare no effort to keep our future relations just as pleasant.

Yours very truly,

BRUNSWICK & COMPANY

By *EJH*

EJH:EG

C. W. SHEPHERD
217 NATIONAL AVENUE
STANFORD, OHIO

July 15, 1918

Brunswick & Co.,
104 Broadway,
Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen:

32 Not long ago I saw somewhere that you were contemplating adding to your present line of hardware a new device for obtaining gauges quickly. I have been looking for something like this and would like all the information you can give me about it, including prices and terms.

1100 When you send the information about the gauges I wish you would also ship me two gross of your No. 621; that is, provided the quality is all you say it is in your catalog. That lot of your No. 618 which you sent me last month was about as poor an article as I ever saw, and if your No. 621 isn't any better, perhaps you'd better not send any of it, as I want good goods or none at all.

240 By the way, now that I think of it, I sent you an order last week and haven't seen it yet; can't you ship your goods more promptly so I can get them on time?

(Special) Your statement came yesterday, and I'll send you a check next week sure, for part of it at least.

Now hurry along that order.

80

Yours truly,
C. W. Shepherd

We are looking forward to receiving your check in settlement of your account for last month, which you say you will send next week.

32 Sending Requested Price List

It is a pleasure to comply with your request of (date). We are sending you today a copy of our (price list or article requested), in order that it may reach you promptly.

417 Reference to Circular

For a complete description of (name of article) take a careful look through the circular which I am enclosing (sending). It will help you to decide exactly what fits your needs, and will give you thorough information about quality, prices and the satisfaction felt by representative users.

5100 Sending, Simply

Thank you for your order of the (date).

I have seen that your goods were carefully packed and shipped. They should reach you now in (two or more) days. Let me know if they do not come promptly, or if you have any questions to ask about them. I am confident that you will be thoroughly satisfied with this shipment. I am therefore looking forward to other orders from you in the near future. How may we serve you further?

62 We Want to Do All Possible

Feel assured that we always want to do everything we can to give our customers complete satisfaction.

240 Not Yet Time to Reach You

We find on looking through the records of our shipping department that the goods left the wareroom on the (date). Therefore, it was hardly possible for them to have reached you at the time you wrote to us. If, however, they have not arrived by the time you receive this letter, will you please let us know at once, so that we may duplicate the shipment to you and start a tracer?

(Here is where special paragraph is inserted)

80 Thanks for Past and Future Favors

We want to thank you for the interest you have already shown, and will spare no effort to keep our future relations just as pleasant.

BRUNSWICK & COMPANY
HARDWARE
104 BROADWAY

Chicago
July 17, 1918

C. W. Shepherd,
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We want to thank you for the interest you have already shown and will spare no effort to keep our future relations just as pleasant.

Yours very truly,
BRUNSWICK & COMPANY
By E.H.N.

EJH:EG



WHY NOT ANSWER YOUR MAIL THIS WAY?

How easy it is simply to jot down two or three numbers with a word here or there and possibly a dictated sentence every now and then! You will find it much easier than dictating whole letters—and think of the time you'll save. W. H. Leffingwell, author of "Scientific Office Management," estimates that with this plan you can save 37½% of the time it now takes you to handle your correspondence. For example, if it now takes you one hour to answer your mail, you can cut it down to less than 25 minutes. Take the letter shown in this insert, for instance.

The letter written by C. W. Shepherd starts out with an inquiry for information—it contains also an order, a complaint about the quality of goods in a previous shipment, a complaint about a delay in receiving goods, a reference to future payment, and a request for speed in handling the order. Pretty complicated, you'll admit—and yet it is answered quickly and effectively by simply noting the numbers of form paragraphs and dictating one original sentence. And yet, the letter that goes out bears no earmarks popularly supposed to characterize a form letter.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

The chief argument for standardizing correspondence is the establishment of a uniformity of style and policy. This argument applies with equal force to a one-man business and to the concern employing dozens of assistants. This uniformity is almost impossible in an office without a paragraph system, but where that method is used, the preponderance of paragraphs written by one person dominates the style, and the correspondent unconsciously adopts it in a very short time.

Getting the personal touch is purely a matter of style, though many people imagine that it depends upon whether or not a letter is dictated. The form letter or paragraph must, it is true, have been originally dictated to some one person, either imaginary or real, but it is quite possible to make a specially dictated letter so impersonal that even the most ardent admirer of special dictation would be appalled.

Another important advantage of the paragraph system is that one can write good letters on all kinds of days, which as every correspondent knows, is a practical impossibility by any other method. A correspondent at times gets dull which has its effects on the letters he dictates, but no matter how dull he may feel he can remember that paragraph B24 just fits a certain case, and he can write those figures on the letter and hand it over to the typist.

It must be admitted, however, that a paragraph system has never been designed which will answer all of the routine letters that come into the house. This is no argument against the system, for if one can dispose of but 50% of the letters in 25% of the time necessary to dictate, that will leave so much more time to dictate the special letters. Without a paragraph system, a busy correspondent will be often tempted to slight the important correspondence.

Nor is it contended that the form paragraphs or their classification as shown in this system can be applied as they stand to any or all businesses. They do, however, form the foundation upon which may be built a form paragraph and dictation system that will exactly fill the requirements of any business.

My experience has taught me that many of the paragraphs appearing in this book may be successfully applied without changes to any business while others will of necessity need adaptation to suit particular lines of business. This adaptation is very important and should be worked out and applied very closely.

PREFACE

In preparing a system of standard paragraphs one should realize that the principle of reuse is being employed, that of using innumerable times, brainwork performed but once. There is therefore no necessity for speed. Take as much time as is necessary with each paragraph in order that it express exactly the thought that it is intended to convey. Another advanced principle must be employed, that of scheduling. A certain portion of the day must be set aside for this work and continued daily until the system is sufficiently completed. I have known many cases where a paragraph system was needed and actually desired, yet not devised because no one had time to do the work. A correspondent should never consider it time lost to prepare paragraphs which will shorten his day's labor. Set aside a definite time each day for this work.

An added feature of this dictation system which will be found very effective in every office, are the five separate paragraph books, containing the sales order, complaint and collection paragraphs and the correspondent's manual and standard practice instruction book. They are reproduced in this form from the book in order to provide a working desk copy for typists and correspondents. The executive may thus have a complete system for his personal use without depriving his assistants of their working copies. The paragraphs and letters in these books are printed on one side of the page only, making it possible for those concerns which may care to adapt one of the several card systems described in Chapter XIII, to clip the paragraphs and paste them on the cards.

W. H. LEFFINGWELL

CHICAGO, OCTOBER 1, 1918

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CHAPTER I

PUTTING THIS BOOK TO WORK FOR YOU

BEFORE a series of form letters was adopted in an electrical equipment factory, four correspondents and four stenographers were required to handle the mail. Within a month after a form letter chart and system had been put into use, the staff was reduced to one correspondent and one stenographer.

Dictating letters day after day, for five, six, and sometimes eight hours with little intermission, the manager of this factory finally came to the conclusion that he was repeating only a few basic facts in most of his correspondence. The same combinations of words, he noticed, crept into his communications time and again. Sometimes entire letters, with possibly the exception of only one or two small details, were found to be phrased exactly alike.

He took from the files carbons of all letters which he had dictated for the past month, and thoroughly dissected them. His analysis proved his point. There were only about a dozen fundamentals dealt with in all the month's correspondence. Almost every letter could be classified under one of these dozen headings. The variations were only in minor details.

With the results of his analysis before him, the factory manager decided that by standardizing he could make his correspondence less costly and monotonous, and at the same time improve its quality.

His first step in this direction was to list the dozen main headings and classify under them all the variations which had appeared in the letters. When this work was finished, he found that he had on his complete list a few more than 200 items.

A letter was dictated to cover each item. Into each of these letters, no matter whether it answered an inquiry, met a complaint, or acknowledged an order, he put the

Cut down the cost of letter writing

How one manager analyzed the correspondence

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Why standard letters give satisfaction

same care as if it were intended to sell a big bill of goods. As the series stood when it finally met his approval, every letter was excellent in quality, and each covered just one, commonly recurring point. Bound in book form, the series was distributed among the correspondents and stenographers, and it was used thereafter for all except the unusual correspondence.

In any business, a searching analysis of the letters written and received will show similar results. Under cover of a thousand different handwritings—concealed in the various methods of expression of as many men—the same inquiries, complaints, and order combinations are coming in through the mail day after day. The same replies also, the same excuses and the same arguments, are dictated time and again in letters written to prospects and customers.

Perhaps this will help you

A few letters, it is true, will be out of the ordinary run. Such are those in which a firm's policy is considered, financial matters are decided, unusual contracts are in prospect, and so on. But the volume of such correspondence, compared with all the letters received in a day, is small. Varied as it seems, today's mail really brings up few problems that were not discussed, decided, and worded yesterday or last week.

The great problem is to enlarge replies in a fundamental way. Figure 1 illustrates the method which the manager of the electrical equipment factory used for ready reference to his form letters. Each article manufactured by the company received a distinctive general number, beginning with 100 and running to 600. Thus, all correspondence relating to 17-K motors was classified under 100; all relating to 24-J motors under 200; and so on, each class of product being identified by a "hundred" unit. Within each general class were divisions and subdivisions, so arranged as to enable the correspondent to find the correct paragraph to use for replying, in the shortest possible time.

A simple plan for insuring quick reference

As an example, a customer requests that full information in regard to a 25 horse-power motor, number 17-K, be sent to one of his friends. Running down his chart, the correspondent quickly locates the general heading for this type of motor, and it requires but a minute to find under "120" the list of letters dealing with cases where a customer sends the name of a prospect. Without

Form Letter Chart

100-199 17-K Motor

100 Orders Article

- 101 Sends Money**
- 102 Requests Sent on Trial**
- 103 Not in Stock**
- 104 Credit Not Sound**

110 Wants Information

- 111 Asks for Description** _____
 - 111-1 10 Horse-power**
 - 111-2 20 Horse-power**
 - 111-3 25 Horse-power**
 - 111-4 40 Horse-power**

- 112 Asks for Price** _____
 - 112-1 10 Horse-power**
 - 112-2 20 Horse-power**
 - 112-3 25 Horse-power**
 - 112-4 40 Horse-power**

113 Asks for Name of Dealer

120 Sends Prospect

- 121 Asks to Tell about** _____
 - 121-1 10 Horse-power**
 - 121-2 20 Horse-power**
 - 121-3 25 Horse-power**
 - 121-4 40 Horse-power**

130 _____

200-299 24-J Motor

200 Orders Article

- 201 Sends Money**
- 202** _____

FIGURE 1: In order to make his form letters quickly accessible, one manager uses a chart like this. The use of a modified decimal system of indexing simplifies the classification of

the various letters and enables the correspondent to find the correct paragraph without losing time. Each article which the company handles is given a distinctive general number.

Inter-office Communication

Addressee Frank Lane

Department Production Date 6-20

Subject Tarson and Co.

Please comply with, or note number checked below

1	Reply to my letter of	9	See letter of dated and explain
2	Send	10	Complying with your letter herewith find copies of
3	Furnish immediately billing price	11	Attached find bill rendered on informal order. Forward to customer with request for formal order
4	Enclosed find c. o. d. bill requested in your letter of	12	Refer to bill and furnish correct customer's order number
5	Furnish car number and reshipment date	13	Has requisition been billed complete?
6	Furnish correct reference	14	When will shipment on order 1463 be made?
7	Note below information asked for in yours of	15	Refer to requisition and furnish bill number
8	Furnish further information or details of allowance covered by your credit number		

June 30th.

Order Department
Per L. B. Mason

FIGURE 2: A thorough analysis of inter-office correspondence resulted in this form, which contains all the questions most frequently asked in one office. Instead of writing

a note for every inquiry all the correspondent has to do is to check the question he wants answered. A word or two supplies the answer, and a worth-while saving of time is the result.

referring to the letter itself, the correspondent sees that number 121.3 is just the one to use. This method of grouping makes reference simple.

You can make similar savings

The correspondent marks the number 121.3 on the letter he is answering and throws it into the letter box. Without further instructions, the stenographer copies the correct reply from her form letter book.

A series of symbols and guide checks was another short cut devised to save time in the correspondence reorganization of this concern. As he reads a letter for the first time, the correspondent red-pencils in a small circle those portions to which he wishes to refer again. Then, when he comes to number or dictate the correct reply, his eye is guided at once to the vital points, and it is unnecessary for him to read the letter entirely through a second time.

Notations like the following are his guide to the stenographer when he has finished with a letter or wishes further information.

Symbols that save time

P—bring previous correspondence;

I—investigate this thoroughly;

F-10, F-15, and so on—file 10 (15, and so on) days ahead in tickler file;

FC—send to central files.

The stenographer secures data as directed, or files the letters properly, as the directions may be, and the correspondent seldom leaves his desk.

What to do with interoffice communications

Interoffice communications were studied and the questions commonly asked standardized in the same way as the correspondence with customers and prospects. However, it was found here that a single sheet made up in the style of Figure 2 answered practically every purpose and saved time. These blanks were printed on the office duplicating machine. It is necessary for the inquirer simply to write on one of these sheets the name of the man he is addressing and his own name, and put a checkmark opposite the matter about which he is inquiring, adding, if it is thought necessary, a symbol or word to make the question plainer. The answer is made on the same sheet.

In any concern handling a considerable number of articles, the combinations that commonly arise run into the thousands. Even to list them all would be difficult;

*Combinations
that cover your
requirements*

to compose a form letter series that would cover them would be impracticable. Here, the solution that has been worked out in other concerns is not more form letters, but more form paragraphs. The size of the standardizing unit is simply reduced, and thus the flexibility of the system is increased indefinitely. With only three paragraphs a considerable number of combinations is possible. With 50 or 100 fundamental paragraphs at one's disposal, the number of combinations that can be made is almost unlimited.

*How to include
names and
"special
points"*

In such a system, each one of your paragraphs takes up just one subject—sets forth to the prospective customer one chain of argument in favor of the article; tells why one item on an order cannot be shipped; answers one complaint; or explains one reason why your customer should pay promptly for the goods he has bought. A single paragraph can, however, frequently be made to cover any number of cases, simply by leaving space for the name of the article, the date, number, and so on, to be filled in correctly as each letter is copied. A broom, for example, a keg of nails, a suit of clothes, a gas engine and 50 other articles may be out of stock for different orders. But only one paragraph, stating the fact and leaving space for the name of the article to be filled in, need be composed. When the analysis (page 2) has been soundly made, form paragraph dictation is quickly learned and fits a great variety of enterprises with extraordinary aptness. Of course, incomplete analysis and unwillingness to become familiar with the paragraphs, on the other hand, are sure to make trouble.

*"Dictating"
the letter*

The correspondent using a form paragraph book has a chart similar to that used in connection with the form letter series. When he "dictates," instead of noting the number of one form letter, he writes the numbers of the various paragraphs that bring out the points he wishes to make, in the order in which they are to appear in the letter, and with the salutation and close he desires, if unusual. Each paragraph is originally written with an eye to having it fit in naturally before or after any other paragraph in the series. The complete letter, because of this particular attention to coherence, is well rounded and reads quite smoothly from first to last—far more so than the average rapid-dictation phrases of the all-day correspondent.

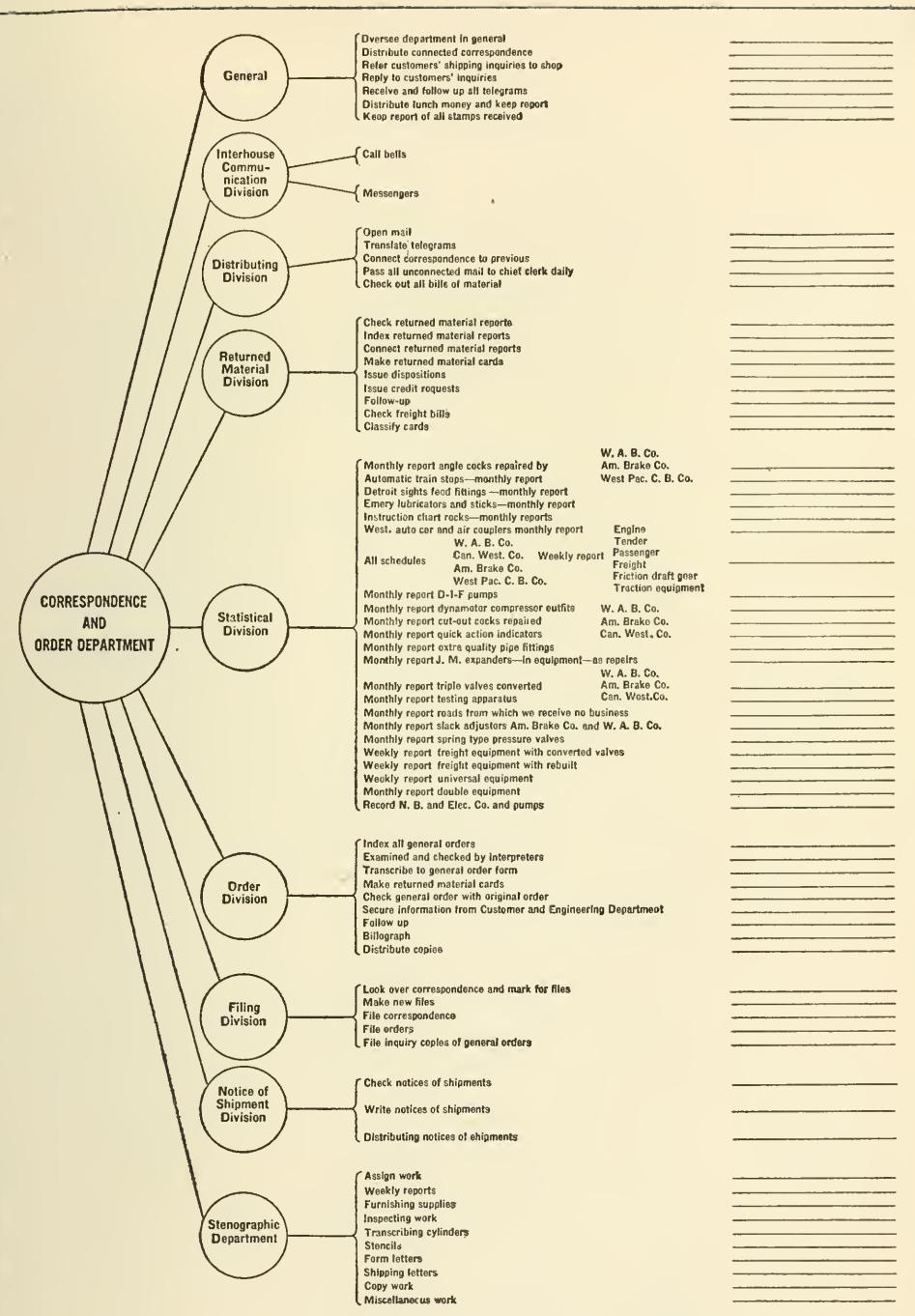


FIGURE 3: It clears up hazy conceptions to have your organization mapped out in black and white. That's what this chart does for the correspondence and order department of

one concern. There is no chance of waiving responsibility when the work is outlined like this, especially if the individuals responsible are named on the blank spaces at the right.

*This of course
is true*

Neither form letters nor paragraphs, however, can be written to cover every need that will arise. To some letters you will have to dictate individual replies. But the proportion which these bear to your total correspondence can be reduced to a small percentage, consisting for the most part of the friendly or policy letters of the men at the head.

A result of the factory manager's analysis was the standardized dictation chart (Figure 4). Finding that the average correspondent in dictating a letter offhand strikes out in a more or less haphazard way with little idea of how he is going to tell his story, he devised this chart to serve as a guide.

It affords a standard and effective viewpoint for starting the letter, developing it logically and bringing it to the right kind of a close. The correspondent checks each important letter against the chart, deciding the attitude and style which it seems best to adopt, and the correct method of approach.

*Hitting the nail
on the head*

A good way to start any letter is to find a subject in which the man to whom you are writing is interested, and tell him something about it in an interesting way. Instead of using merely general phrases, be specific. If you discover that an order which he claims he never received left your warehouse on the sixteenth of the month, tell him that; but ease your reply by telling him at the same time how you searched the files to get the information for him.

*This plan will
often bring
additional
business*

In bringing the letter to a close, ask yourself whether or not you wish the prospect to do something. If not, all you need is a friendly sentence or paragraph. If, however, you do wish to bring him to action, urge some reason against delay. Perhaps you can remind him that the stock of the article you are selling is limited and only early orders can be supplied; or that prices will increase in the near future; or delay means a money loss to the prospect; and so on. When, by such means, you have urged your prospect to prompt action, make the action easy for him. Enclose a card which he can sign, an envelop stamped and addressed, or a telegram filled out ready for dispatching.

The body of the letter, being the largest part, is the part where it is perhaps easiest for correspondents to go astray. Here you are urging the prospect to buy, the

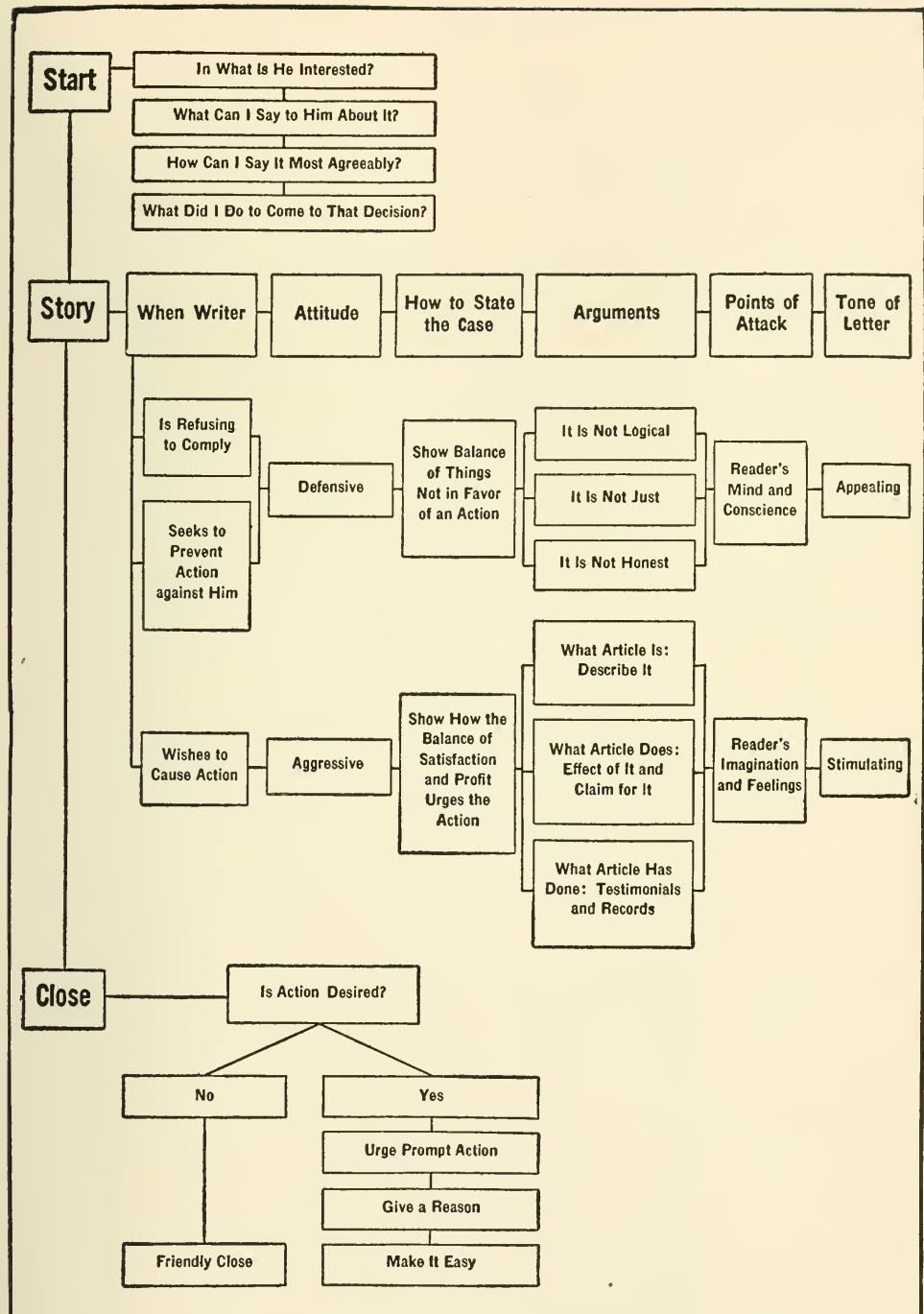


FIGURE 4: A manager found that his correspondents were too apt to plunge into a letter without being quite sure of their purpose. So he devised this chart as a guide, and with

its help each important letter is now thoroughly analyzed before it is dictated. On the opposite page is a description of how the chart is used. It can easily be applied to almost any letter.

8-10-26	Sent			Received	Notes
	Form Letters	Form Paragraphs	Dictated		
Orders Total	4			135 159	
Orders Requiring Special Handling				20	
Collection	12	20			
Sales	1,000	240	5	20	
Complaints	1	11	1	14	
Special			5		
Miscellaneous				12	

FIGURE 5: Here's a form of report which has been found particularly helpful in keeping tab on correspondence. It's extremely simple, but it indicates conditions at a glance. For in-

stance, if the number of dictated letters is unreasonably large, the standard paragraphs may need revision or perhaps the trouble is that additional paragraphs need to be prepared.

slow customer to pay, or trying, perhaps, to make the man who is dissatisfied with his purchase see that he has received generous value; or endeavoring to forestall possible objections from other customers by telling them how you have handled their orders. Yet, whatever the subject, you will find that in all your correspondence you are either (1) defending some action or attitude of your own, or (2) trying to prevent some move against you, or (3) aggressively urging some action upon the man to whom you are writing.

Recognition of this fact enables you to standardize to a certain extent all letters you dictate, as to the kind of argument you must use and the style you may wisely adopt. When you are on the defensive, you will make your phrases cordial, with no abrupt or disputed statements to arouse opposition. If your position permits you to be on the aggressive, as in a sales letter, your style may be more vigorous. You can "come up hard" with a strong statement or the assertion of a fact.

After a concern has passed out of the purely one-man stage, the executive himself can handle only vital correspondence. The mail, nevertheless, affords an important means of keeping a finger on the pulse of the business; and every executive is interested in knowing definitely how close his service is keeping to the public's taste. To achieve this, one manager leaves all correspondence details to his employees, but has his secretary provide him every day at 4 o'clock an analysis of incoming and outgoing letters.

The executive quickly checks over this analysis (Figure 5). He notes letters which he wishes to see and points out places where there is special need for his secretary's supervision in handling the mail. Complaints from customers reveal the snags in his business machine, and show him just which departments and persons are the ones which are at fault. The list of orders and inquiries, with similar figures for the same day of the preceding year noted in red, brings out fluctuations and growth in a strong light.

Any outgoing letters where an error might affect the company's reputation, the manager himself "proofs." Minor faults he allows to go through with the idea that they will draw the customer's complaint. Then he calls the correspondent's attention to the matter. Having

*After all, isn't
this really the
case?*

*Where to put
the proper
emphasis*

*How one execu-
tive keeps in
touch*

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*House policies
are easily
watched*

both his blunder and its result before him, the man who is at fault is unlikely to commit the same mistake a second time. Had he been corrected before the letter went out, the point would probably have been driven home to him less vitally.

By the combination of (1) standard paragraphs and form letters which indefinitely keep his best paragraphs at work, and (2) standard methods of watching his correspondence, this manager develops his assistants, cuts out the unnecessary costs which bulk large in concerns which fail to systematize their correspondence, guards his correspondence against expensive blunders in important issues and makes every stamp add to the good will of his public.

CHAPTER II

USING PARAGRAPHS TO CLOSE SALES

Sales in a hardware concern had been falling off. An expert advertising man was engaged to find the reason for the slump, and remedy it by a vigorous campaign. He was given complete liberty to make whatever changes in the advertising policy of the concern he saw fit, provided only that he brought results. After a week's thorough examination of the company's selling plan, he closeted himself with the president and produced carbons of average letters which he had found in the prospect files.

"The reason your sales are falling off," he said, tossing the folder upon the table, "is not because of any weakness in your advertising copy. On the whole it is the equal of that produced by any house in the trade. The real weakness lies in your correspondence. Your inquiries have been handled by low-priced correspondents, who are frequently careless in their replies, and scarcely ever use convincing sales arguments. Prospects who might have been turned into faithful customers are here treated in a curt and almost discourteous way. Probably your correspondence in other departments is equally haphazard. If you will spend in six months as much money putting your correspondence on a sound basis as you spend every month for advertising, I'll guarantee this falling off of sales will stop."

"You spend a lot of money in the magazines and trade papers to get customers," the advertising man continued, "and when you get them you slap them in the face with letters like these. You either must change completely the personnel in your correspondence department, and hire high-salaried men, who will put some life into your letters but who will be a constant drain on your pocketbook; or else pay to standardize your correspondence once and for all. We can, however, make up a paragraph book to cover every point in your routine

What the advertising man found out

The weak spot in this selling organization

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*This is surely
a worth-while
saving*

correspondence, and with it the least efficient correspondent will be able to dictate letters that will average favorably with those of a \$4,000 man."

The president accepted the specialist's verdict. When the paragraph book was completed and put in use, the company found that it had made a saving during the first year of \$10,000 in letter costs. The sales slump, moreover, was completely checked.

In making up the series of paragraphs for this concern, the method followed was to keep a triplicate carbon of every letter for a period of 60 days. At the end of this time these carbons were cut up, and separated in piles according to subject. The subjects were classified and listed, and then from beginning to end new paragraphs were dictated to cover every phase of each subject that had been brought out in the analysis. Especial care was given to starting and finishing paragraphs so that they would fit in naturally with other paragraphs, or would stand alone.

*An expert check
on each para-
graph*

When this work was done, every paragraph was taken up with the correspondent who was expected to use it. The sales department, for instance, passed on all sales paragraphs, and the credit department on all credit paragraphs. Wherever necessary, individual paragraphs were revised. As finally used, they bore the O. K. of all department heads, and were in addition the careful work of an expert letter writer.

*Even the branch
house corre-
spondence is
included*

The paragraphs were bound in book form and distributed to every correspondent, and to others who had occasion to write letters. The same paragraphs were also distributed among the 35 branches of the company and were placed in the hands of several hundred jobbers having exclusive territory. Thus the entire correspondence of the company from the president's office in New York, to the branch in St. Louis and the jobber in Dallas was standardized. Of the increase of effectiveness in the concern's letters, there came to light many convincing instances.

As this experience proved, it is not only possible to standardize routine correspondence, but moreover, standardization is sometimes the only method possible to maintain letters on a uniformly high level without spending too large a sum in salaries to high-priced correspondents.

Sales paragraphs, it was found in this concern, were the most numerous and, at first, the most difficult to bring into the system. But logical analysis showed that the different kinds of arguments were not large. There are two main divisions in these arguments, two angles from which you can approach your prospect (Index, page 21). In the first case, you discuss specific features of the article you are trying to sell; in the second, you discuss attractive features of your proposition. The inquiry to be answered is a good index to the points you wish to touch on.

These two angles are always considered

When you approach a prospect from the point of view of the article itself, you have several definite talking points, such as quality in the article, its actual mechanical make-up, and so on; the effect it will have on the prospect when he uses it, increasing his pleasure, benefiting him, and so on; and finally, a convincing argument is a testimonial which shows by some definite test, the worth of the article under consideration, or by the regard in which it is held by other users.

Approached from the angle of the proposition, your talking points consist of prices, which may be low or high, but must certainly be mentioned and explained; methods of ordering, perhaps, if these are especially attractive; the kind of service that you render; and finally, the guarantee which assures the customer that he will receive what he wants in the goods themselves or satisfaction in some other way if these should by any chance fail to meet his expectations.

The talking points of this angle

These are the talking points which you can use in answering the inquiries that come in the mail from day to day. In writing the replies to these inquiries, and endeavoring to make customers out of the inquirers, you are putting fire under your boilers, and the fact of whether you have good or bad workers or a good or bad system in the correspondence department, determines how hot the activity in your shipping room becomes.

One place where results will show

Careless replies will lose many prospective customers. Even the best correspondent will get tired occasionally and let a mediocre letter slip through to the mailing room if he has to dictate an original reply to every inquiry. But when he has once made himself familiar with paragraphs prepared in advance to cover all points that arise, paragraphs which bear the stamp of approval of the

"Temperament" is discounted at once

house, then it makes little difference if he is feeling out of sorts; his letter as it goes to the customer will be sure to carry selling power, inspiration, and the personality of the concern.

The series of sales paragraphs accompanying this chapter is a careful digest, and, as far as possible, a general adaptation of the most successful paragraphs used by many different concerns selling through dealers or at retail, and each illustrates a different kind of argument. The best-informed letter writer in your correspondence work, therefore, by running through them and noting slight changes in the wide margin, can at once adapt the needed paragraph to your business. In a concern carrying many varieties of goods, the size of the series can easily and quickly be enlarged to cover the different items, by working in additional paragraphs under each logical heading here laid down.

*Ways to apply
this argument*

Take as an example the headings that fall under the first division—the effect of the article when in use. First of these is the argument, "this article will increase your own pleasure."

Applicable to many kinds of articles, this argument is especially suited to the so-called luxuries that help to bring more beauty and convenience into life. It is the type of argument that may be applied to a piano, when the writer suggests the pleasure that comes from the exquisite tones of his instrument; to a book, the contents of which the correspondent will describe as delighting and instructing the reader; to a lamp, a kind of tea, a kitchen cabinet, a pair of slippers, an automobile, and hundreds of other articles.

*Making this
argument work
all the time*

Each of these articles effects its end in a different way, affords a different kind of pleasure, appeals perhaps to a different sense. The piano appeals to the love of music, the automobile to the love of comfort or convenience or speed. Just as the Morris chair manufacturer does, you can picture your prospect making use of the article you offer. A complete sales section for your paragraph book should carry one specific paragraph of this sort for each standard article sold.

This same application can be made in the case of other kinds of sales arguments which you may use. Not all articles, for instance, will appeal to the prospect through his children; though on some items this is the

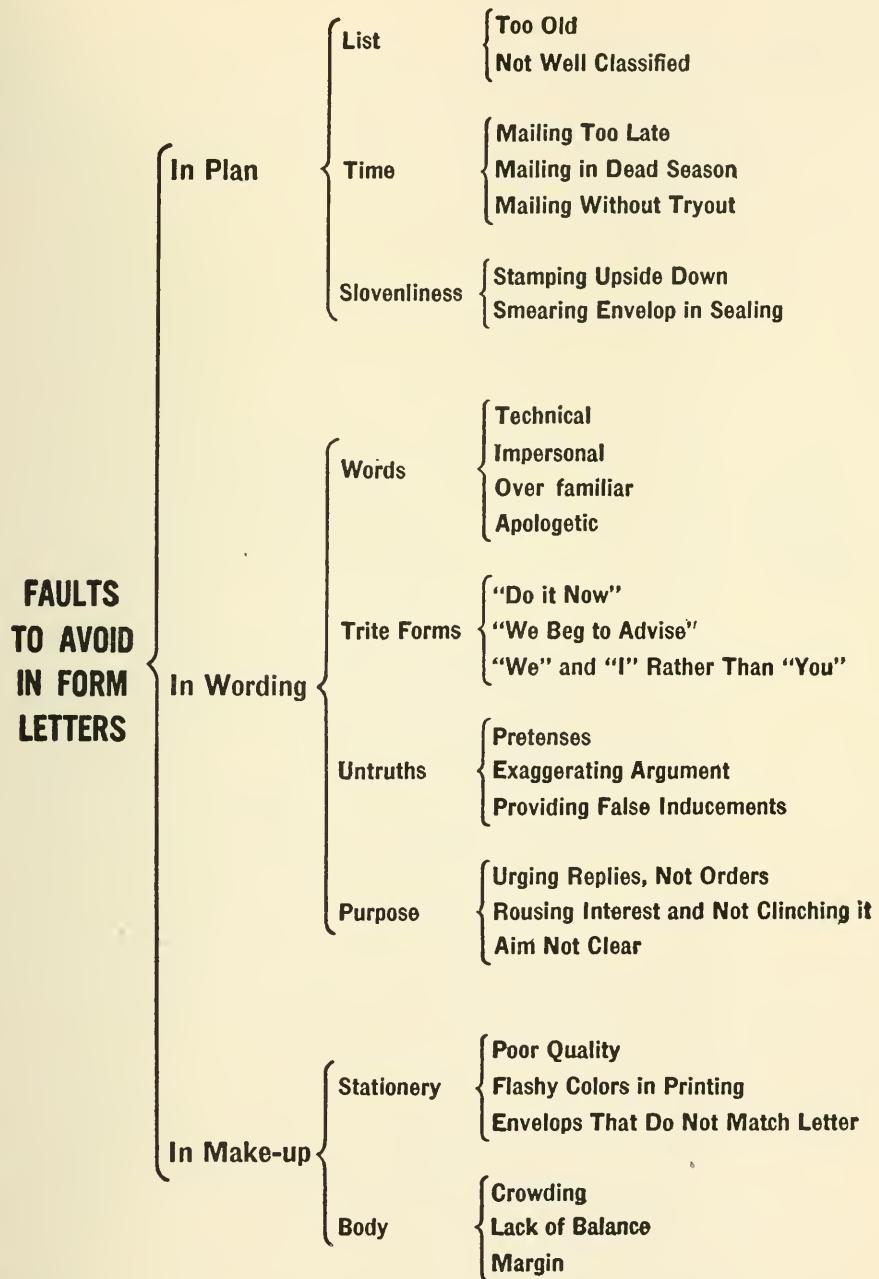


FIGURE 6: Although the use of paragraphs cuts down the number of mediocre letters that may slip through to the mailing room, a good deal of care has to be taken, however, to keep

the paragraphs free from blunders. This chart points out some of the dangers it will pay you to watch. Carelessness in plan, in wording or in make-up will spoil an otherwise effective letter.

*Simply adapt
the argument
like this*

strongest possible appeal. Neither will the money-making argument serve on every occasion, nor the physical or mental appeals. But these appeals remain the fundamental ones having to do with the effect of the article, and one of them, or several, can be adapted to your needs, often by merely changing a few words with a pen in the wide margin left for that purpose.

Arguments classified under "the proposition" come up with little variation in every business. You have to talk about the price and the method of ordering; if you give service of which you are proud, that will afford you an effective talking point; and you must face or hedge on the point of guaranteeing satisfaction. Possibly you may not need to use all the price paragraphs—perhaps your goods are sold at uniformly lower prices than anywhere else, and you will have no need to explain that the best is cheapest, regardless of price. Perhaps, again, you sell only for cash; in which case you can do away with three out of the four "methods of ordering" paragraphs. These points you can quickly check over in the following pages to suit the needs of your own business; but the big outlines of the analysis and, in many instances, the phrasing will serve you as well as they have in the original letters.

In answering letters with these standard paragraphs, the correspondent simply jots down on the letter or on a slip attached to it the numbers of the correct answering paragraphs. When these have a space left for an insertion which ties the reply down specifically to the case in point, he notes after the number the three or four necessary words. Take a typical example, which may be enlightening, from the experience of a furniture manufacturer who sells direct to consumers.

*Putting the
principle to
work*

A prospect writes and asks about a Morris chair which he has seen at a friend's house. He wants to know what it costs, and asks if he can have one sent to him on approval. The logical answer is first to thank the prospect for his interest, next tell him something about the mechanical construction of the chair itself, then give him the price, followed by some persuasive selling talk; finally, it is necessary to tell him (if this happens to be the case) that all orders without exception are for cash only; and in the close, it is desirable to use a clincher that urges quick decision.

SALES-PRODUCING PARAGRAPHS

A few days' use of the paragraph book makes the correspondent so familiar with his range of paragraphs and in line with the promptings of the inquiry, that he is enabled to "dictate" a reply instantly by penciling this notation on the letter:

31.....Johnson; an Easy-back; two; chairs.
410.....
430.....the chair; \$18.
400.....
442.....
81.....

The completed letter follows. Note that paragraph 410 in this letter is special, being the description of the mechanical make-up of the chair and includes all the points to bring out about the chair. By similar application you can at once put the paragraph series to work in your own business:

Your inquiry reminds me of something one of our customers said the other day when he dropped in at my office: "Johnson"— I think these were his exact words—"if everybody knew the comfort there is in an Easy-back, you wouldn't have to advertise." This man had bought two other different kinds of chairs before he found out about our line, and he knows values and styles pretty thoroughly.

The Easy-back is built of the best materials throughout. You can secure it in any finish, to suit the woodwork of your rooms, with rich, upholstered leather cushions to match. A special patented device allows you to adjust the back to any desired position while you are sitting in it, simply by pressing a concealed button. In addition there is a book and magazine rack on the side of each arm; and also an adjustable footrest which can be fitted in a second to the right position for any person, tall or short, and it automatically moves when you adjust the back.

*Could anything
be more simple?*

*Additional
words can
easily be
inserted*

*This paragraph
covers every
point*

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*This paragraph
works every
day, rain or
shine*

Our price for the chair is \$18. The Easy-back is one of those pieces of which we are proud. It will show you how to spend your evenings at home in comfort. Many a restful hour will you spend in it, sitting before the fire, with a lamp on the table at your side, and a good book in your hands. The long, adjustable lines fit you like a cushion, and afford complete relaxation and restfulness. What could be more inviting after a hard day's work?

*Delicate hints
like this are
handled uni-
formly*

We do business on a very narrow margin of profit. For this reason we cannot afford the possibility of incurring a single dollar's loss on bad debts. Our invariable rule, therefore, is to require cash with the order. You will see how this rule is one of the factors that makes it possible for us to give lower prices than competitors.

We can give your order immediate attention, and only await your decision to put ourselves entirely at your service.

A set form letter might easily be devised to cover inquiries about this chair. But it would be certain to contain some matters not of interest to the inquirer.

In the above letter, nothing appears which the prospect does not wish to know. He has specifically inquired about practically every point mentioned in the reply. The sales talk included will not offend him. A form letter could scarcely compete with this personal and specific appeal.

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31	Your inquiry reminds me	23	
32	Sending requested price list	23	
33	Would you be interested in?	23	
34	You would benefit from	23	
35	You are interested	24	
36	Did you receive price list?	24	
37	Are you getting all you should?	24	
38	Startling, to win attention	24	
39-49	Use these numbers for special opening sales paragraphs you may add	24	

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81	Hope for favorable reply	25	
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83	Invitation to call	25	
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411	We will not stand for quality-cutting	29	
412	Qualifications of men and factories making	29	
413	Result of years of labor	30	
414	Can be used anywhere; and by anybody	30	
415	Educational (for article perhaps not generally known)	30	

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Constant use of this
index will help you
to memorize the
paragraph numbers

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421	Specific, quoted	34
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432	Lower than elsewhere—reasons	36
433	Lower than before	36
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SALES PARAGRAPHS

OPENERS

30 Thanks for Inquiry

We thank you for your inquiry regarding our (name of article).

31 Your Inquiry Reminds Me

Your inquiry reminds me of something one of our customers said the other day when he dropped in at my office: "(name of writer)"--I think these were his exact words--"if everybody knew the comfort (genuine value) there is in your (name of article), you wouldn't have to advertise." This man had bought (number) other different kinds of (name of article) before he found out about our line, and he knows values and styles pretty thoroughly.

32 Sending Requested Price List

It is a pleasure to comply with your request of (date). We are sending you today one of the latest copies of our (price list or article requested), in order that it may reach you promptly.

33 Would You Be Interested In?

If you were sitting in the Pullman and saw a five-dollar bill under the seat, you would be keenly interested in seeing whether there were any more in the same place.

34 You Would Benefit from

We are confident that you would find great (pleasure or benefit) in a (name of article).

In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

35 You Are Interested

You will be interested in this letter for more reasons than one. It contains live news about a live subject.

36 Did You Receive Price List?

A few days ago we mailed you our (price list, or article requested). We have had no reply. Did it reach you?

37 Are You Getting All You Should?

Are you getting all the (satisfaction out of life, use out of your automobile, and so forth) that you should?

38 Startling, to Win Attention

About that (name of article) you were going to buy--

39-49 Use these numbers for special opening sales paragraphs you may add

CLOSERS

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

80 Thanks for Past and Future Favors

We want to thank you for the interest you have already shown, and will spare no effort to keep our future relations just as pleasant.

81 Hope for Favorable Reply

We can give your order immediate attention, and only await your decision to put ourselves entirely at your service.

82 Write, Whether or Not You Order

Please write us, whether you order now or not. You are sure to have some questions you'd like to ask, and we will gladly answer them. Let us know exactly how we can serve you.

83 Invitation to Call

Call and see us the first chance you get. You will find opportunities and bargains here that you can't find anywhere else.

84 Summing Up Arguments

Consider the attractiveness of our prices, the prompt and thorough service we render, the quality of our goods and the binding nature of our guarantee, and send us your order today.

85 Order Blank Enclosed

For your convenience we are enclosing an order blank, which you can fill out without trouble and mail today.

86 Send Trial Order

Send us a trial order by return mail. Then you can see for yourself that all we offer is true.

87 Order by Telephone

Call (telephone number) and give us your order without trouble or delay. It will receive the

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

same careful attention as if you visited us
in person.

88 Order Now

The time to order is now, while you have the
matter before you and can do so in a moment.
May we look for your letter in the return mail?

89-99 For additional paragraphs

EFFECT OF THE ARTICLENote Changes in
Phrasing Here**400 Increase Your Own Pleasure**

The Easy-back is one of those pieces of which we are proud. It will show you how to spend your evenings at home in comfort. Many a restful hour will you spend in it, sitting before the fire, with a lamp on the table at your side, and a good book in your hands. The long, adjustable lines fit you like a cushion, and afford complete relaxation and restfulness. What could be more inviting after a hard day's work?

401 Increase the Pleasure of Someone Dear to You

Your children are your dearest possessions; you want them to have the best that money can buy, and to be the healthiest and happiest you can make them. Remember how, when you were a youngster, you were always wanting something that would "go"? Our Red Major Wagon is solving the problem for hundreds of boys and girls in city and country. A child six years old can sit in the seat in this neat little wagon, and pedal and steer at the same time; and the seat is big enough to "hold double." Out in the fresh air from morning till night, your youngsters will play "choo choo" with it, and willingly use it to run a dozen errands a day for mother.

402 Save You Money

We promise you an actual saving of 10% on your carbon bills when you adopt Texcarbo throughout your office, no matter which priced paper you buy. Say you have twenty stenographers, and each one uses 100 sheets of carbon paper a month, at 60 cents for 100 sheets: \$12 a month at the old rate; \$10.80 when you use Texcarbo --a saving of \$1.20 a month, or \$14.40 a year. Fit the formula to your own office needs, and figure out just how much you will save with Texcarbo.

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

403 Help You Do More Work

The Dixagraph is always ready. With it standing beside your desk from morning till night, you don't have to wait until the stenographer comes, or while she sharpens her pencil or gets a new note book. The little, irritating delays are done away with, as well as the small distractions that so hinder effective work. You can concentrate wholly on what you want to say, without having to think of three or four other things. The Dixagraph will go as fast as you do. It will add an extra hour to your day, without keeping you any longer at the office.

404 Do You Physical Good

You know how it is at the office. Some days you feel like "eating" work; and then again things don't seem to "go" at all. You ought to be in tiptop condition all the time. The size of your pay check depends on it. Put aside fifteen minutes every morning and use the Developer. It sends the blood tingling through your veins and makes you feel as if you had just come from a vigorous plunge in salt water. It keeps your body fit, and that means that your mind is fresh, keen and alert.

405-409 For additional paragraphs

DESCRIPTION OF THE ARTICLE

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

410 Actual Mechanical Details

The Easy-back is built of the best materials throughout. You can secure it in any finish, to suit the woodwork of your rooms, with rich, upholstered leather cushions to match. A special patented device allows you to adjust the back to any desired position while you are sitting in it, simply by pressing a concealed button. In addition there is a book and magazine rack on the side of each arm; and also an adjustable footrest which can be fitted in a second to the right position for any person, tall or short, and it automatically moves when you adjust the back.

411 We Will Not Stand for Quality-Cutting

When we started in business we were thoroughly convinced that the public cares as much for quality as for price. With that belief behind us, "quality first" was the motto drummed into the ears of every man in our employ. We were right. The public does want quality—you want quality in whatever you buy. And because we have constantly kept this fact in mind, the (name of company) is today recognized by everybody as the "quality house."

412 Qualifications of Men and Factories Making

We wish you could go through our factories and see for yourself just what we mean by "Perfection Quality." It is not an empty catchword that we use when selling goods and forget when shipping them out. You should see the pains with which every process is handled. It is the attention which we give to the little details, as well as the big points, that not only gives our suits the greatest utility possible, but adds also a note of distinction which no other ready-to-wear clothing manufacturer has equaled. The men in the factory are all skilled workmen, highly paid, and they feel a

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

personal responsibility for every piece of work they turn out.

413 Result of Years of Labor

It has always been our ambition to produce a varnish that will not check, chip, or spot. With a view to finding such a varnish, expert chemists were at work in our laboratories for ten years before they finally succeeded in hitting upon the correct formula. Besides the wages of these high-priced experts, we spent thousands of dollars helping them in their investigations. Time and again they seemed to have arrived at the solution of their problem, but always our rigid tests picked some flaw--until they hit on the formula for Right-Grade Varnish.

414 Can Be Used Anywhere; and by Anybody

You can use the Electroglobe in your living rooms and bed rooms. It is absolutely safe, healthful and cleanly, and convenient beyond every other kind of lighting fixture. You can use it in the barn, granary, or mill, and feel certain of the total absence of fire risk. You can use it out of doors, for it cannot blow out. You can use it anywhere, under any circumstances. And its operation is so simple that children of five can work with it as well as grown persons.

415 Educational (for Article Perhaps Not Generally Known)

Most of the methods of garbage disposal that have been tried are makeshifts rather than logical attempts at a correct solution of the problem. The old-fashioned wagon collector, for instance, is a nauseating sight on the streets, and he is unhealthful as well, for he carries germs and disease, and scatters them wherever he goes. Burning is the method which offers most advantages and practically no objections. With the Smith Waste Destroyer there is no longer any need of the city

collector and the hideous-smelling can on the back porch. The Destroyer is installed in your house just like a furnace. You throw your garbage in as you would coal into the furnace, and all you have to do is remove a few ashes once a week or so. There is absolutely no disagreeable odor.

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

416 Has Long Been on the Market

It is now 40 years since we began selling Virginia Condensed Fruit Extracts. Among all our competitors, we alone have behind us a record like this—40 years of continuous satisfaction and quality-giving service. Do you for a minute think that we could have continued to exist and thrive in the face of the bitter competition we have had to meet if our products had not always been the very best on the market?

417 Reference to Circular

For a complete description of (name of article) take a careful look through the circular which I am enclosing (sending). It will help you to decide exactly what fits your needs, and will give you thorough information about quality, prices, and the satisfaction felt by representative users.

418-419 For additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

SALES-PRODUCING PARAGRAPHS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

TESTIMONIALS

420 In the Article Itself—Sample Sent, and How to Test

Try the sample which we are sending you. Test it in any way you wish. Put it to the severest trial it could possibly be expected to go through in actual use. Let us know the results if they are in the least unsatisfactory to you. The finished article which you buy is the same as the sample. Both will stand up under the hardest tests you wish to devise. We know, because we have put this product to the trial. If we had not, we should not dare ask you to.

421 Specific, Quoted

You will want to know what (name and title of man) thinks of our (name of article). In placing his (second, third) order of the year, he says: (Quote the testimonial).

422 Many People Say

People who have used our (name of article) are enthusiastic in their praise of it. We have received many letters from them, telling how they have enjoyed (been benefited by) its use. If we were to print all these letters and send them to you, you would have a big book. Ask one of our customers. There are a dozen of them near you.

423 Officially Approved by a Recognized Body

Reorganization of office methods recently brought the Kansas Railroad Company to a consideration of various makes of adding machines. After a thorough examination and trial, not only of the Christy machine but also of the half dozen best-known competing makes, the purchasing agent of the company declared the Christy machine best from every point of view—quality of work, speed, durability, ease of operation, price. As a result of this trial, 200 adding machines already

SALES-PRODUCING PARAGRAPHS

owned by the Kansas Railroad Company and used in their various offices have been scrapped and replaced by 175 Christy machines, which will perform all the work formerly done on the other machines.

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

424 Used by Well-Known So-and-So

The best people use the best articles. You will want to know that Jackson's Boxed Cube Sugar is used by the Murray, Fifth Avenue, Euclid, and Broadway Hotels, as well as by the University, City, Taylor and Ocean Beach Clubs and over 300 other large hotels, restaurants and clubs in your city. Twenty-five of the railroad lines in this country and many boat lines use Jackson's Sugar exclusively in their dining service.

425 Reference to Enclosed

Look at the facsimile letters we have enclosed. These are samples of the kind of appreciations that come to us in the mail nearly every day. Read what the people who have used our (name of article) have to say. When you have tried it, you will be just as well satisfied as they are.

426-429 For additional paragraphs

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

THE PROPOSITION

430 Simple Statement of the Price

Our price for (name of article) is (amount).

431 Buy the Best, It Is Cheapest

You can buy cheaper goods than our (name of article), but you cannot buy better. We freely admit that you will pay a few cents more in first cost for our goods; but in final cost you will save many dollars. The wear and tear that you should get cannot be had from a cheaply made article. Buy the best and avoid first cost pitfalls. Save the repair money that you will inevitably lose if you buy cheaply made goods. Get the satisfaction that comes when you know you have the very best article that can be bought.

432 The Price Is Lower Than Elsewhere—Reasons

Our prices are low because of the peculiarly favorable location of our factory. We are close to the sources of our raw materials; and are able to draw on the labor of the best skilled workers in the country. Moreover, there are five steam railroads, an electric line, and three boat lines accessible from our wareroom. These are the reasons why you can get unequalled qualities at unrivaled prices by buying from us.

433 The Price Is Lower Than Before

In buying this (name of article) you get exactly the same article at (new price) as was formerly sold at (old price). Not a single detail has been changed. The articles are identical in every respect. We are able to make this lower price now because the manufacturer has lowered his prices to us; and rather than keep the difference as extra profit for ourselves, we are going to give our customers the entire benefit of this cut in the price.

434 The Price Is Lower Than Will Be LaterNote Changes in
Phrasing Here

Now is the time to buy. Prices are rapidly going up. These properties are the choice residence sites of the South Shore. They are in big demand. We still have lots cheaper than you can secure them from any other dealer, but we shall be forced to raise our prices on June 1 at the latest. Buy now, and take advantage of the profits that advancing prices will bring to every purchaser.

435 The Price Includes a Premium

Not only do you get the (name of article) for the purchase price, but you will also get a (name of premium), which we are giving away absolutely free to our customers who send in their orders now. This is a special inducement only, not a regular offer, as the (name of premium) is so expensive that we cannot afford to give it away for more than a limited time. Order at once, therefore, if you want to be one of those who benefit by this special offer.

436-439 For additional paragraphs

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

METHOD OF ORDERING

440 Send No Money, We'll Ship Free

We do not ask you to decide about buying now. You can do that later. Mail the special examination card and on will come the (name of article) all charges prepaid. Then after six days' examination--after you have had a chance to try it out--if it is not all we say and more, send it back at our expense. We'll pay the charges both ways. Can we give you any stronger evidence of our own faith in the quality of our goods?

441 Send Part of Money and We'll Ship

Send us only (amount) and we will send you the (name of article) for examination in your own home. Use it for two weeks just as if it were entirely your own. If at the end of that time you are not completely satisfied, send it back to us at our expense and we will refund the amount you have paid. If you are satisfied, mail us the balance (amount) due. We are certain you will be satisfied. If we were not—if the satisfaction of many buyers had not made us confident—we should never dare to make such a liberal offer.

442 Send All Money with Order

We do business on a very narrow margin of profit. For this reason we cannot afford the possibility of incurring a single dollar's loss on bad debts. Our invariable rule, therefore, is to require cash with the order. You will see how this rule is one of the factors that makes it possible for us to give lower prices than competitors.

443 Monthly Payments

If there is any reason at all why you do not want to pay the entire sum now, we shall be very glad to have you take advantage of our monthly payment plan. You can pay 10% down

SALES-PRODUCING PARAGRAPHS

when you get the goods, and the rest in monthly instalments practically as large or small as you choose. Interest at 6% is charged only on the unpaid balance, and rapidly decreases with every payment which you make. The larger the monthly payments, of course, the more rapidly does the interest charge decrease.

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

444-449 For additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

OUR SERVICE

450 Prompt Delivery

You will get your goods as fast as the railroad can bring them to you. There will be no delay in our wareroom. We make a special point of keeping on hand a full stock of every line we carry, and our methods of packing and shipping have been studied and standardized for prompt, safe deliveries. Only the most unexpected circumstances can keep us from filling your order the same day it is received.

451 We Will Help You Order—Tell Your Needs

Some days ago a man wrote and told us that he couldn't send us his order for a certain article because he couldn't figure out the right amount to fit his needs. If that is your fix, or if there is anything at all about our goods or our methods of doing business that you would like to know, don't hesitate to write to our service department. We have established this department for the sole purpose of helping our friends. Whatever it is that you want to know, we will do our best to serve you; and we have a large mass of material at hand for that purpose. Don't think that because you ask us questions you have to buy. You can ask a dozen if you want to, and we will answer them all, whether you give us an order for a single dollar's worth of goods or not.

452 General Service Features

Service has been one of the factors which we have developed to a high point during our many years' experience. Every detail of our work will please you. We give the most careful attention to your order, from the time it is received in the mailing room until the goods are on the shipping platform. And our attention does not stop there. If anything in the least dissatisfies you, we are always ready to investigate and set the matter right.

SALES-PRODUCING PARAGRAPHS

453 Our Selection Is Large

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

When you buy from us, you have a wonderful range of articles to select from. We carry low-priced goods, fit for the humblest pocket-book or the simplest taste, and high-priced goods that will satisfy the richest and most elaborate fancy. Whether you want to pay \$1 or \$100, you will find something that suits you in our stock.

454-459 For additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

GUARANTEE

460 General

Remember that the very life of our business depends on giving absolute satisfaction as to prices, quality, promptness, safe delivery, close attention to details, and the fair treatment of every customer. So we guarantee you satisfaction.

461 Absolutely Binding

Our guarantee is absolutely binding. There are no "conditions," no "if's and and's" about it. If our goods fail to give the service we pledge them to give, if they don't last the length of time we claim they will, we will let you be judge of what is a satisfactory settlement. Could you ask any concern to do more?

462-499 For additional sales paragraphs

SALES-PRODUCING PARAGRAPHS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CHAPTER III

STANDARD LETTERS THAT MAKE SALES

Letters are one of the recognized mediums for the sales department's use in almost every kind of business—factory, jobbing house, and local store. And in selling, except where the individual order is large and the "leads" definite, "letters" means form letters. Obviously, however, every sales letter must be written to fit its errand. Standard forms cannot be laid out for miscellaneous use.

Yet nothing interests a sales or advertising manager more than to get hold of successful order-bringing form letters and the returns they have actually scored. For the sales letter writer who works hour after hour upon a page which may head the list of profit makers in his concern for years thereafter, there are in these tested paragraphs inspiration, sense of direction, many a definite help in the way of strong phrasing, a development of truer feeling for what is magnetic and salesmanlike.

Further than this, the human nature behind the orders to which different classes of buyers are persuaded by various sales letters is the same. Analysis shows that like application of principles, if not the same phrasing, will strengthen letters even on propositions as different as dealer and consumer selling. The first paragraph, for example, will be either a reply to an inquiry or some approach so interesting as to get attention for the unsolicited sales letter that goes as the first move in selling to a complete mailing list. Such analysis can be carried throughout the entire letter, thus enabling the correspondent to get ideas for his own work on methods of approach, phrases that deepen interest, plans to arouse curiosity, samples of candor and convincing description, methods of explanation and proof, introductory phrasing, testimonials, methods of handling price and payments, approval offers, premiums, "do-it-now" clauses, and tricks of easy reply.

*Letters that
"pay out"*

*They get under
the skin of the
prospect*

*The letters that
bring home the
bacon*

In a similar way, a sales letter which has been proved out is, as a unit, an inspiring example of selling spirit; and a number of selling form letters (page 49) teach how the letter may be made to stir the reader's appetite for the printed information that is enclosed and through just what steps in making the sale each letter that is used should advance.

Selling by letter in practically all businesses falls under one of four headings. Whatever you are offering, you are (1) attempting to educate your list to buy your product as a means of getting away from some disadvantage to which they have been blind; or (2) you are coming forward with a new product, little troubled as yet by competition; a product which people have come to want, but have not known where to find; or (3) you are asking a man to go out of his way or change a buying habit to purchase from you rather than from a competitor; or (4) you are offering something which most people are too apt to buy carelessly and offhand without much thought as to brand or source.

If the sales letter writer will study his proposition and decide in which of these classes it falls as regards the average reader he is addressing, he can then, by reference to successful sales letters of that type—persuasive, descriptive, logical, or suggestive (Figure 7) at once see one successful method of wording a proposition which at bottom is identical with his own.

*An interesting
experiment*

Two propositions occasionally are so nearly alike from this point of view, that the phrasing which sold for one can in a few minutes be adapted actually to sell the other. An advertising manager recently became interested in an experiment of this sort. He had noticed a 10-inch, three-column newspaper advertisement which in wonderfully persuasive language suggested to home owners the purchase of an article which the average man has always done without and is not likely to consider buying, on his own initiative. The advertisement opened with a headline which brought out in a striking way the discomfort and disadvantage of doing without. In a half dozen short paragraphs, the writer had played upon this feeling of disadvantage, magnifying it phrase by phrase until at the easy-inquiry paragraph a large percentage of his readers had actually taken down the telephone receiver and made the first step in buying.

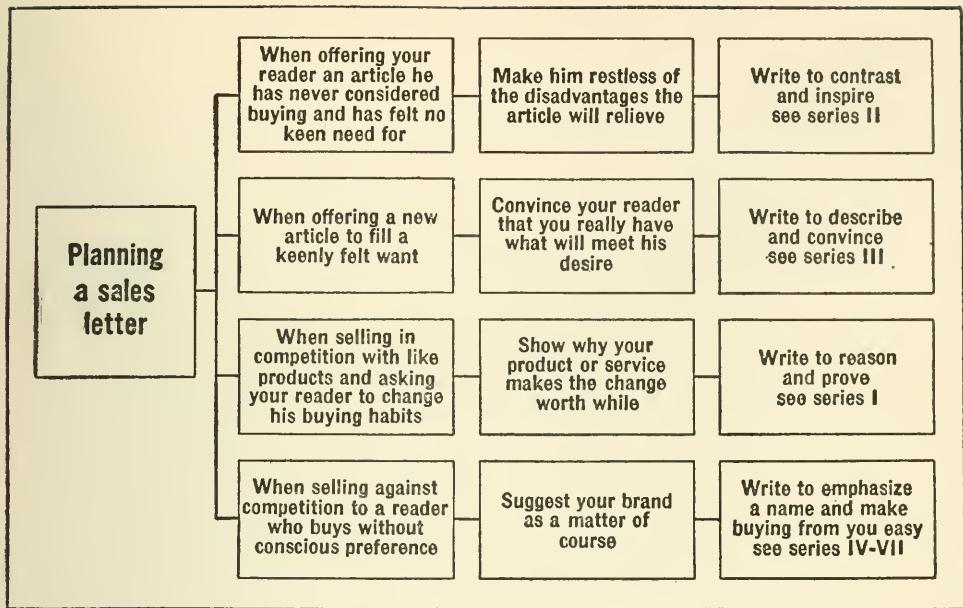


FIGURE 7: A chart like this will help you plan your sales letters. When you've once decided to what class your product belongs by checking it up in the first column, the second

and third columns will show what style of argument to adopt. The rest is of course simple. When you have used a chart like this, you'll see how much easier it makes your work.

LETTER TITLE		Special Offer D 360 PROPOSITION		3 Pay		TEST DATE	1/6/18.	
LETTER KEY	TERRITORY	SIZE OF LIST	LIST NUMBER	KIND OF ORDER	DATE	NUMBER OF ORDERS	TOTAL	LATER RETURNS
B.L.36	Miscellaneous	1000	36D	6		2 3 4 2 3 1 1	16	
				30D	"	1 2 1 3 2 1	10	
				F.T.	"	1 1	2	
							28	
INQUIRIES								
What reduction for two terms at half down Agency.					NUMBER	1 2 1 1	5	
					"	1 1 2 1 1	6	
					"	1 2 1 3	7	
							18	

FIGURE 8: The one sure test of a sales letter is obviously the number of orders it pulls. Results recorded on cards like this will quickly indicate which letters are really the

successful ones. Then an analysis of these letters will bring out the winning points. These may then be standardized and form the basis for other sales letters, equally successful.

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*Perhaps this
will work for
you, too*

The advertising manager investigated this copy, found it successful, and changing a word here and there adapted it into a letter meant to make the reader feel the disadvantage of doing without an entirely different product which he had never planned to buy and for which mentally he had never set aside funds. Both propositions were in the same class. The logic of the appeal was easily turned to the new use and the letter brought returns above the average.

This was, of course, merely an interesting experiment. Every proposition deserves to have its sales literature tailor-made. The experiment does, however, suggest in a novel way how like in their true nature, as good salesmanship analyzes them, are propositions seemingly quite different. For this reason, in the following pages there have been gathered 10 actual sales letters which have made good and the arguments advanced. While the statements made in the letters cannot be vouched for, the letters themselves are reproduced as successful letters which other concerns have found profitable.

ADAMANT CEMENT COMPANY
ROCKLAND, OHIO

Mr. E. F. Eastman
Watkins, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

Coming down to the office the other morning I talked with a man who's made quite a fortune and he told me how he did it. I thought right away that you would like to know, too, because I can tell you just how to do what he did.

He said, "Wayne, I saved twenty-five cents out of every dollar made." Now it may have been hard sledging for him to do that, but I can show you how to do it and have just as much to spend as now — then it's easy.

You can do it by using Adamant Slag and Sand — they increase profits twenty per cent on your concrete work — save twenty-five cents for you on every dollar.

Adamant Slag can do this: first, because it's twenty-five per cent lighter than stone. The cost of the entire job drops twenty-five per cent when you use our Slag.

Second, because it's rough and porous — the cement and slag sand can grip it with a hold that never gives up. There are no cleavage directions in slag concrete and it will never crack.

Third, because slag is absolutely fireproof; since every burning element has been taken out of Adamant Slag by heat so terrific that the Slag once ran in a molten mass.

To get the "how" back of these increased profits, without obligating yourself in the least, simply fill out the enclosed card and get it in today's mail — a scratch of the pen will bring you prices, freight rates, samples — and a word or two which is worth having on your desk. Mail it now.

Yours very truly,

F. C. Wayne

**INCINERATORS, INC.
SCHENECTADY, N. Y.**

Mr. L. O. Beeman
19 Gramercy Park
New York City

Dear Sir:

In family residences in three short blocks on Fifth avenue there are thirty-two White Ash Incinerators.

Thirty-two receptacles have been banished from the thirty-two kitchens in these homes and all waste matter is finally destroyed where it originates, in a complete and sanitary way. And this is not the whole story.

The refuse collector never visits these homes. He was discharged with the advent of the incinerator. Formerly he made 32 unsanitary calls each day, 192 each week, not counting Sundays, or a total of nine thousand, nine hundred and eighty-four calls yearly. Now he does not call at all.

In these thirty-two homes the incinerator has in a single year saved — made unnecessary — not less than 9,984 visitations of the unsanitary garbage collectors.

The incinerator is doing this for homes, hospitals and institutions everywhere. Are you not personally interested?

If there is anything further you wish to know, write us, or send for our representative.

Yours truly,

Incinerators, Inc.

HAYMAN MOTOR CO.
HAYMAN, ILL.

Mr. J. V. Beaty
Barrington, Ill.

Dear Sir:

As a boy on the farm, down in Ohio, whenever we got a piece of farm machinery, I remember that my father used to run to the tool box, open it and inspect the tools immediately. If he found a high-class monkey wrench in that box he was happy and his impression of the quality of the piece of machinery and the good judgment of its manufacturer went up immediately.

I was reminded of this the other day when a woman stepped into the tonneau of a Hayman, sat down, smiled pleasantly and said, "I like this car because they don't skimp on the cushions."

I would like very much to be present when you experience your first ride in the Hayman. Of course, comfort is not everything, but owners who have driven cars for years will confess to you that, after all, it is the last word to the owner. Nothing is more important to women and children.

There is a certain ease of movement, a pleasing elasticity of spring action, a pitch to the cushions, a shape to the arm rests — a certain something about Hayman comfort which we cannot describe, but we know that you will feel.

I want very much for you to ride in the Hayman. Please write, telling me when you will be ready to have our representative call.

There will be no objection and he will give you any information that you want.

Yours very truly,

A. W. Dean

DEFENDER INSURANCE COMPANY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. T. D. Odell,
28 Concord St.
Roxbury, Mass.

Dear Sir:

We are neither necromancers nor soothsayers, but at the same time we can tell you that November 22 should be marked on your calendar with a red flag as a warning to you to stop and think before passing that date.

Why? Because midway between your birthdays it marks your change of age, the date when you grow a year older in a night. Prior to that day, from an insurance standpoint, you are thirty years old; on and after it you will be thirty-one, and your rate will increase.

What of it? Well — if you expect to increase your insurance this reminder should cause you to get busy and secure the additional amount while you can take advantage of the lower rate.

If you have not given the matter the necessary attention it should cause you to stop, face the situation and ask yourself, "Would my death cause a material loss of income to my family?" If an analysis of your affairs compels an affirmative answer, your family needs additional protection, which you can best secure through a life income contract under the policy ten sound business men picked from two hundred.

If this is a new one on you just check the enclosed card and the information we can give you will amply repay you for the time you give us.

Yours very truly,

Defender Insurance Company

BROOKVALE CREAMERY
BROOKVALE, IOWA

Mr. M. F. Beard
32 Sumner Street
River City, Iowa

Dear Sir:

What makes for good butter?

The breed of cattle, the proportion of fatty matter, climate, the animal's health, and the nature of the cow's food — these are the influences which determine whether butter is good or bad.

With us, all of these influences work for pure butter — Brookvale Brand. Our mountain meadows above the city give us the right food, healthy animals and a favorable climate. The breed of our cattle is a butter breed. We get, as a result, milk heavy with fat globules — milk which makes for good butter.

We have even enlisted water in our service. The pure mountain water which our cows drink in our meadow pastures contributes to the rich, distinctive flavor of our milk — the raw material from which Brookvale is made.

Every morning this fresh, fatty milk comes down to us from the meadows. Come into our new retail store at 26 Greenfield St., and see some of it churned. Sample it. The new store is also selling eggs, cheese and buttermilk, all of a standard as high as that of Brookvale Butter. Drop in today.

Yours very truly,

Brookvale Creamery

**CARBIDE DISTRIBUTORS CORPORATION
NEW YORK CITY**

E. L. Newman
53 Center Street
Bridgeport, Connecticut

Dear Sir:

In answering your inquiry regarding acetylene lighting, we wish first of all to state our position in the matter.

We are distributors of the Homeway Carbide from which acetylene gaslight is made. We do not make generators or apparatus for using this carbide.

In the manufacture of carbide the Homeway Carbide Company has several million dollars invested in two large plants and over a hundred warehouses for the distribution of this product throughout this country.

There are 41 different manufacturers of acetylene apparatus in the United States whose generators are acceptable to the Board of Insurance Underwriters, but we do not ourselves make a single generator.

Under separate cover we are mailing you descriptive booklets in which you will find interesting data and facts bearing on some of the questions that have arisen in your mind.

We request that you fill out carefully and return to us the enclosed form so that our engineers may furnish you further information and decide which type of generator you could use with best results.

We will be glad to give this information and advice free of cost.

Yours truly,

Carbide Distributors Corporation

GILMORE & COLE
BURLINGTON, VERMONT

V. C. Holbrook
20 Everett Avenue
Burlington, Vermont

Dear Sir:

As a lawyer you make a business of knowing the evidence in the case, and understanding its weight and importance.

We'd like to have you take a case for us and go into it in the thorough way in which a good lawyer always goes into things.

We have evidence to prove that we've got the best clothes and other things to wear that are to be found in this city. Hart, Schaffner & Marx clothes are the principal fact; but Whitman hats and Hattenfall shirts are corroborative.

Will you look into it for us? Any day you can step in here we'll lay the facts before you, and ask for your candid opinion.

You probably don't care to take a case on a contingent fee; but we can assure you that if you decide that the evidence really does support our contention, and decide to act on it for yourself, you'll make a good profit.

Yours very truly,

Gilmore & Cole

F. H. LESLIE COMPANY
DALTON, MASS.

Mr. K. C. Harvis
Lancaster, Utah

Dear Sir:

The sheet of paper you now hold in your hands is of the quality used by those who sometimes have to "dictate direct to the machine."

Those who are compelled to put business stationery to such a severe test use LESLIE'S BOND, because they know that if any mistakes should occur, they can be quickly erased without spoiling the finish of the paper.

If LESLIE'S BOND has made an impression on you it will also make an impression for you on your customers.

May I ask you to do us a great favor by filling out the enclosed card? It will greatly assist us in determining the quality of stationery in which you may be interested.

Very truly yours,

F. H. Leslie Company

KELLOGG TOASTED CORN FLAKE COMPANY
BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN

Hunter's Grocery
Westover, Delaware

Gentlemen:

We want you to open the next lot of Kellogg's Toasted Corn Flakes in the WAXTITE package that you receive, take two packages home and give two packages to each of your salesmen with our compliments. Send the bill to the Kellogg Toasted Corn Flake Co., Battle Creek.

Our reason for making this request is that we want you and your salesmen to get acquainted right at the outset with this new package.

Our sample crew will reach Westover within the next few days. Every sample we put out in your town will be a generous package — a good serving for a whole family. And each package will also contain a fresh sample of Kellogg's Toasted Wheat Biscuit, separately wrapped.

The BIG thing about Kellogg's WAXTITE seal is that it brings the flakes to you and your customer just as fresh, crisp and tender as when they leave our ovens. This is going to mean a LOT of new business and we want you to get YOUR SHARE of it.

Food inspectors everywhere will indorse WAXTITE and the grocer who pushes it will gain a reputation for quality goods.

You will want a good stock of Corn Flakes and Toasted Wheat Biscuit on hand to cash in on the demand which is sure to follow the sampling. If you will fill in and mail the enclosed card, we will see that you are supplied through your jobber with a fresh lot of WAXTITE goods.

Yours truly,

Kellogg Toasted Corn Flake Company

BURTON'S STORE

Mr. Ralph Steele
Midway, Penna.

Dear Sir:

Beginning the 12th day of July, Burton's Longwear Shoes will drop to the very bottom. There is no need of giving a long list of prices, for I would still have to show you the facts.

At this season of the year there are many people that want to buy shoes either for the summer or the winter. Being mid-season, I realize that some real inducement must be made to move the goods. I am not going to hold back anything in the line of footwear; women's, misses', child's, men's and boys' high and low cut, good and bad, all go this time.

Now, even if you don't live in town, it will pay you to make a special trip direct to Burton's Store, 29 High Street, Midway, the best store in the state for good people and durable, stylish footwear.

This is when the fellow with the cash has the advantage. The best sizes and styles will go first. All goods will be sold for a small amount of hard cash.

Remember the date the sale begins. You know the great reduction at our last sale and the way the shoes sold.

A square deal for a round dollar.

Yours truly,

Burton's Store

CHAPTER IV

EASIER WAYS OF ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

When the use of form paragraphs was first suggested to the order correspondent of one nationally known wholesale house, he spoke decidedly:

"Most of our sales are for large amounts, and our men in the field are competing keenly over every order with salesmen from other concerns. Often for some personal reason the prospect gives us the order. The buyer does not want his order acknowledged with a stereotyped letter of thanks, which is cold and impersonal. There has been real competition, and a big order has been the stake. The prize has come to us. To recognize the favor and maintain our standing, I have to give the customer personal attention, thank him in a way that shows I really mean what I say, and tell him how we handle his order."

In spite of this objection, however, form paragraphs were given a trial in this concern; today, perhaps, 90% of the order correspondence is handled by the use of these forms, together with a few complete form letters. The order mail has been thoroughly analyzed and systematized. Letters quite personal in tone are still sent, but the only portions that are actually dictated are the first and last paragraphs. To add a touch of local color, the correspondent personally dictates the opening and close, mentioning in a casual way the particular circumstances that surrounded the giving of the order. Thus the customer sees that he has had personal attention; but the body of the letter, the part dealing with purely routine matters, is composed of tested forms whose use has been standardized.

In concerns where only one article is sold, the post-card or complete letter is valuable for an acknowledgment. This is the simplest kind of correspondence, and the order department is usually the best place, therefore,

Just what does personal attention mean, anyway?

How this concern gets personal attention

PARA- GRAPHS	
1	1
2	133
3	150
4	170
5	52
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Waterman Catering Company

1694 Kennedy Street,
Columbus, Ohio.

Columbus
February 25, 1914

FORM LETTER

ENCLOSURES Bat. #17 Cn. #34

SP. DEL'Y	REGULAR	ORDINARY	✓ Co., Superior St., Buffalo, N. Y.
-----------	---------	----------	-------------------------------------------

Gentlemen:

Increasing business makes it necessary for us to purchase additional cooking equipment. As soon as possible will you ship to us two No. 26 Gas Ranges, as listed in your catalogue No 16? Enclosed herewith is our check for \$94.50 which, according to the catalogue, will cover

FIGURE 9: "Dictating," in the company referred to on the opposite page, comprises marking paragraph numbers on the small slip of paper fastened to each letter. Then the

typist, not a high-priced stenographer, copies the standard paragraphs in the order noted, and a well-balanced letter is the result. This slip has proved both a time and money saver

FIGURE 10: A fairly complete history of correspondence can be recorded on cards like the one shown above. There are spaces for the name and address of the prospect, the date

his inquiry was received, the date answered, and the resulting orders received with the dates on which they were received and the amounts. It's extremely simple but really very useful.

to begin in establishing forms. But where several articles are carried, and a large number of customers order more than one of these at a time, the combinations that may arise are numberless, especially if all the items are not constantly kept in full stock. The complete form letter will serve, of course, only in the unusual circumstances.

Picking one letter from the pile on his desk, a correspondent in a wholesale house illustrated this difficulty. The customer, in this case, had ordered three dozen dish pans, but only two dozen of the style wanted were in stock; a dozen and half glass jars, all of which were sent; and a gross of boxes of toothpicks, which were not and never had been carried.

"Scarcely more than once in a year," said the correspondent, "does such a combination as this occur. But when it does, your letter has to cover all the points, or the customer may think that his order has been poorly handled. We use a complete form letter with blanks to be filled in with the specific articles mentioned in a complicated case like this."

This house, like the other concern, uses form paragraphs for most of the order correspondence. For miscellaneous orders, it finds that only the paragraph plan gives the required flexibility. Each paragraph covers just one point and is so designed that it fits naturally into the letter before or after almost any of the other paragraphs in the series. Consequently, a correspondent who has grown familiar with his book can make the correct combination of paragraphs to fit any occasion that might happen to arise.

A small slip of paper is fastened to every letter (Figure 9). When the correspondent "dictates," he simply marks on this slip the numbers of the paragraphs, in the order he wants them to be copied, noting also any "fill-in" to be made. A typist does the transcribing, replacing a highly paid stenographer. This effects, it is evident, an important economy.

Even more important is the fact that all letters leaving the house are of a high quality. Each paragraph has been carefully worked out, and in its final shape bears the stamp of approval of the management. Naturally, such a paragraph is more effective than one which the ordinary correspondent would dictate offhand.

A good place to begin with standard paragraphs

This combination occurred only once a year

The dictation slip

The four divisions of order correspondence

Analysis of the order correspondence of the jobber, who uses form paragraphs for 90% of his letters, revealed the fact that, apart from the paragraphs required for the opening and close, it contained four general divisions (Figure 11). In the first division were listed instances where the order was filled complete. This required simply an acknowledgment in answer. In the second division were orders on which none of the goods were sent and the only answer possible was an explanation of the reason why. In the third main division were orders shipped not exactly as the customer directed—either different goods were sent, or they were sent in a different way. It was necessary to explain here exactly what changes were made and why. Sometimes questions arose about the amount of money remitted. This part of the correspondence is especially likely to bulk large in a concern where the terms of sale are cash or part cash with the order.

*Getting a line
on your
requirements*

With this fourfold analysis as a beginning it is a simple matter to use the following paragraph series. Run through the carbon copies of your order letters for two or three weeks, and carefully compare them at every point with this analysis and see for yourself how easily the same basic divisions may be applied to your business. A few of the matters covered in the present series may not occur in your letters; and you may find you need paragraphs not included here. But the outlines will be the same, so that will be simple for you to adjust. Many phrases will require only that you change a single word with your pen in the wide margin left for that purpose, and in many cases you will be able to use these paragraphs as they stand.

*This makes
reference quick
and sure*

In the completed series each paragraph has a distinguishing number. Correspondents soon learn the paragraphs by number, and will then make up their letters very quickly after the manner shown in Figure 9.

Sometimes, if regular sales paragraphs do not exist, good results are secured by putting a few words of carefully prepared sales talk into the order letter, though some concerns consider it unwise to combine order and selling correspondence. One jobber uses what he calls "seasonal" paragraphs, which fit naturally into the rest of his paragraph system. Thus, in the early spring, the following paragraph, which pulled sales in 30% of the

Index to Paragraphs

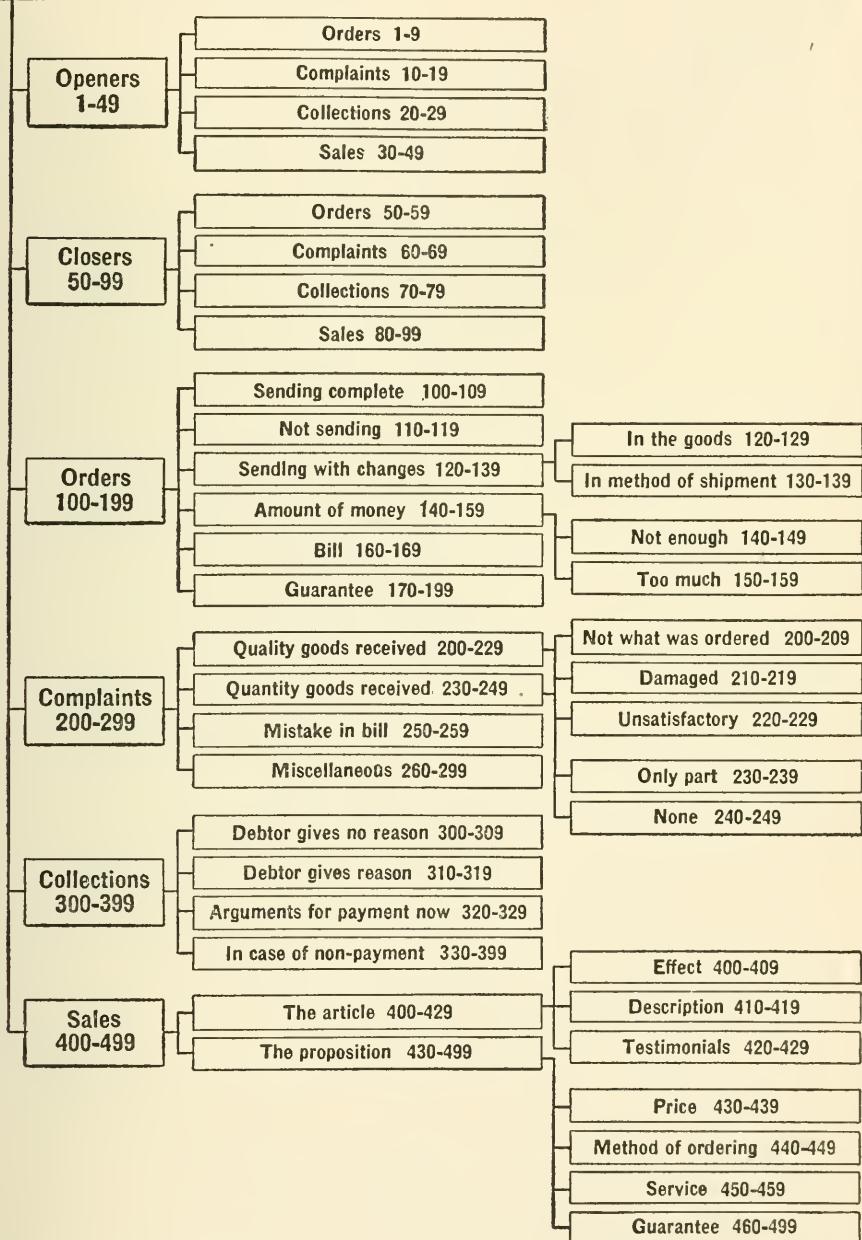


FIGURE 11: It is an index similar to the one shown here that simplifies considerably the handling of correspondence as described on page 62. Outside of the two divisions

given over to openers and closers, all correspondence is divided into four classes, orders, complaints, collections, and sales. The numbers refer, of course, to standard paragraphs.

**FORM LETTER
ANSWERING
INQUIRY ON**

Player Piano 100	General Information 100	101. Asks for Booklet 102. Wants Description 103. Sends Prospect's Name 104. Letter to Prospect
	Price 110	110. Asks Price 112. Dealer Asks Price --- 116. Offers Lower Price
	Wants to Examine 120	120. Wants Name of Local Dealer 121. Wants Piano on Approval --- 124. Have We Branch Office in—?
	Wants More Information 130	130. Asks Size of Piano 131. Can We Supply Model A? --- 135. Does Player Detach from Piano?
	Decline Order 140	140. Orders for Different Parts 141. Foreign Order Wants Credit
	Objections 150	150. Not Suited Small Flat 151. Price Too High, Wants Second-hand --- 155. Can't Afford
	Buy Later 160	160. Will Buy Later 161. Been Sick. Had Hard Luck
	Terms 170	170. Change Terms of Payment --- 175. Offers Order on Different Terms
	Description 201	201. Full particulars 202. Wants to Test --- 205. Size of Piano
	Price 210	210. Cash Price 211. Cash to Dealers 212. Price to Music College 213. Wants Special Price Number
Baby Grand 200	Terms 220	220. Customer Asks Terms 221. Wants Special Terms --- 224. Will Buy Later
	Combination 230	230. Wants With Player --- 233. Wants Bench
	Asks Information 301	301. Full Information --- 305. Size of Organ
	Price 310	310. Cash Price --- 315. Wants Special Price. Number
	Terms 320	320. Customer Asks Terms --- 324. Will Buy Later
Church Organ 300	Objections 330	330. Not Suited to Large Church 331. Can't Afford 332. Price Too High

FIGURE 12: Here's another numerical index of form letters, helpful in answering inquiries. Although this particular index is used by a piano company, the idea is easily applicable

to any business. A thoughtful analysis of your correspondence should enable you to draw up a somewhat similar index which will be exactly suited to your particular requirements.

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

instances, was prepared and inserted in every acknowledgment that left the house:

Fly time will soon be here. You had better take advantage of the crusade against flies which is popular at this time and put a few dollars into your pocket. We have the best fly swatter on the market. The handle is two feet long and the mesh is of extra heavy screening. These swatters are going to be pushed in our advertising, and there will be a big demand for them. In your next order, please tell us how many you want. We guarantee they will sell well. Special price to you is 20 cents a dozen.

A large concern which caters chiefly to the hotel and restaurant trade follows the same plan. It carries many novelties that are to be used only on special holidays. Two or three months before St. Patrick's Day, for instance, a special sales paragraph is made up, dealing with some novelty in green. New ideas that occur from time to time help to keep the paragraph book up to its very best possibilities.

Instead of copying each paragraph into a single letter, one mail-order house economizes in an interesting way. Each paragraph is reproduced on a short letterhead. These letterheads are then placed in convenient numbered sections in a cabinet. When a reply is to be sent, a girl selects the proper sheets for each point from this cabinet, fastens them together and uses a rubber stamp to put the company's name on the last one.

Handled in this way, the letter requires no typing—the plan is quick and cheap. The girl who selects the sheets from the cabinet need not be so high-priced even as a typist and as a matter of fact she performs the work much more quickly.

For some concerns this method would be impracticable because their customers would not like to receive letters made up in such a way. But low prices are the great talking point in this firm, and every method that cuts cost is referred to by the management as an evidence that they save in doing business rather than in the quality of merchandise.

*Taking full
advantage of
seasonal
specialties*

*This is a money
saver if you can
use it*

*No typing
required*

*Cut out
the deadly
monotony*

To standardize order letters is not only easier than ordinary dictation, but more conducive to lively phrasing. Saying over and over, day after day, the same thing in almost the same way, the correspondent cannot help but let this deadly monotony creep into his dictation. Life and interest, on the other hand, can be put into the form once for all. He dictates simply a number, or writes it on the slip of paper, and his mind is in this way left fresh for the special letters and problems that require real originality.

INDEX TO ORDER PARAGRAPHS

OPENERS

	PAGE	Constant use of this index will help you to memorize the paragraph numbers
1 Acknowledgment	69	
2 We are sending today	69	
3 Thanks	69	
4-8 Use these numbers for special opening order paragraphs you may add	69	

CLOSERS

50 Thanks simply	70
51 Sent as soon as money is received	70
52 Order sent—hope will prove satisfactory	70
53 Changes made in order—if not satisfactory, and so forth	70
54 Shipment delayed	70
55 Unable to fill order	70
56 Holding order until we hear	70
57-59 For additional paragraphs	70

WE ARE SENDING COMPLETE

100 Goods packed and sent	71
101-109 For additional paragraphs	71

WE ARE NOT SENDING

110 Never had such goods	72
111 Used to have, but discontinued	72
112 Ordered from old price list, discontinued	72
113 We want cash in advance	72
114 Credit doubtful	73
115 Out, temporarily—are holding order	73
116 Out, temporarily—please reorder if you want later	73
117 Want your approval on changes before we send	73

WE ARE SENDING WITH CHANGES

In the Goods

120 Part now	75
121 Another article—same grade	75
122 Another article—better grade	75

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Constant use of this
index will help you
to memorize the
paragraph numbers

In the Goods (continued)

123	Another article—lower grade—we remit	75
124	Part only, because not enough money	76
125-129	For additional paragraphs	76

In Method of Shipment

130	Too heavy to go by express—cheaper by freight	77
131	Cannot send by parcel post, because of regulation	77
132	Not enough money—therefore sent collect	77
133	We are ordering sent direct from the factory	77
134-139	For additional paragraphs	77

AMOUNT OF MONEY SENT

Not Enough

140	To prepay postage	80
141	If you want the more expensive article	80
142	Because we sent more expensive article	80
143	On account of changes in prices	80
144	On account of your mistake	81
145-149	For additional paragraphs	81

Too Much

150	Mistake of calculation on your part	82
151	Ordered from old price sheet—price lowered	82
152	Because we sent collect	82
153	Because we sent cheaper way	82
154-159	For additional paragraphs	82

THE BILL

160	Sending the bill	84
161	Bill differs from prices on your order	84
162-169	For additional paragraphs	84

GUARANTEE

170	General	85
171	Absolute	85
172-199	For additional order paragraphs	85

ORDER PARAGRAPHS

OPENERS

1 Acknowledgment

We acknowledge herewith the receipt of your order of the (date).

2 We Are Sending Today

We are sending today the goods on your order of the (date).

3 Thanks

Thanks for your order of the (date).

4-8 Use these numbers for special opening order paragraphs you may add

In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

CLOSERS

50 Thanks Simply

We thank you for this order, and ask that we may be allowed to serve you again in the near future.

51 Sent as Soon as Money Is Received

The goods will be packed and sent forward at once upon receipt of the above remittance.

52 Order Sent—Hope Will Prove Satisfactory

We believe this treatment of your order will be entirely satisfactory, and ask that we be allowed to serve you again in the near future.

53 Changes Made in Order—If Not Satisfactory, and so forth

If this treatment of your order is not entirely satisfactory, let us know and we will make good at our own expense.

54 Shipment Delayed

We regret this slight delay, and sincerely hope it will not put you to any inconvenience.

55 Unable to Fill Order

We sincerely regret that we are unable to serve you at this time.

56 Holding Order Until We Hear

We are holding your order until we hear from you.

57-59 For additional paragraphs

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

WE ARE SENDING COMPLETE

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

100 Goods Packed and Sent

Careful attention has been given to the selection and packing of the goods, and we believe you will find them correct in every detail. If they are not entirely as you desire, kindly let us know at once.

101-109 For additional paragraphs

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

WE ARE NOT SENDING

110 Never Had Such Goods

Perhaps there has been some misunderstanding on your part, as we have never carried (name of article). We are, therefore, returning your order to you unfilled. If we could, we should gladly refer you to houses that do carry these goods, but we are sorry that we find it impossible to do this in the present instance.

111 Used to Have, but Discontinued

Since distributing the last edition of our price list, we have stopped handling (name of article). We notified our customers of this fact a short time ago, but probably our letter failed to reach you. Is there not some other article we can supply to you that will take the place of this?

112 Ordered from Old Price List, Discontinued

You have evidently made up your order from an old edition of our price list, for (name of article) has not been listed in the revised edition. We are ordering a copy of the latest edition of the price list sent you, so that your files may be up to date. If this copy does not reach you in a day or so, please notify us and we will mail you another as soon as we hear from you.

113 We Want Cash in Advance

Whenever customers are unknown to us, and they have no credit rating with either Dun or Bradstreet, we make it a rule always to require cash with the order. This is done simply because we conduct our business on so narrow a margin of profit that we cannot afford the loss of a single dollar. Since we must adhere to the firm's rule, we ask you to send the catalog price for the full amount of your order, which is (amount).

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

114 Credit Doubtful

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

Because the reports in our files fail to cover your case completely, the credit department has asked us to wait until it gets more definite information. If you will send the names of three or four responsible men in your city—bankers or business men—to whom our credit man can refer, he will then be able to O. K. your order and put it through for prompt shipment.

115 Out, Temporarily—Are Holding Order

Our stock of (name of article) has been temporarily exhausted, owing to the heavy demand. However, we have placed a rush order with the factory, and the new supply will reach us in a very few days. We are, therefore, filing your order, and shall see that the goods are forwarded to you from the fresh stock just as soon as it is unloaded at our warehouse.

116 Out, Temporarily—Please Reorder if You Want Later

Our stock of (name of article) has been temporarily exhausted, owing to the heavy demand. An order for a new supply has been placed with the factory, but we find it will be several weeks before this can reach us. Under these circumstances we think you will not want us to hold your order on file. If, however, you wish to have the goods forwarded to you as soon as they arrive at our warehouse, will you please notify us at once?

117 Want Your Approval on Changes before We Send

It will be impossible for us to fill your order exactly as you desired. However, we can substitute (name of article) for (name of article). As this is slightly more expensive than the article you ordered, we want your approval before we send it. We are withholding shipment until we hear from you. So kindly let us know your wishes at once.

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

SENDING WITH CHANGES IN THE GOODS

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

120 Part Now

In accordance with your instructions, we are sending the (name of article) today. Great care has been given to the packing and shipping of this consignment; we feel sure it will reach you in first-class shape and prove satisfactory in every way.

121 Another Article—Same Grade

In making up your order we have found it impossible to supply you with the exact grade of (name of article) that you desired. Rather than delay your shipment, however, we have substituted an article that is exactly the equal in every respect of the one you ordered. It costs us exactly the same and sells for the same, as you will see by referring to our price sheet. But if you find when you examine it that this doesn't entirely suit you, we shall be glad to have you return it to us at our expense.

122 Another Article—Better Grade

It has been impossible for us to supply you with the exact grade of (name of article) which you desired. Rather than delay your shipment, however, until we received a fresh supply, we have selected from our stock another article of a little better quality than the one you ordered. This article costs us more, and regularly sells for more, but since the fault in this instance is ours, we are not going to charge you anything extra. If you find on examination that for any reason you can't use this article, we shall be glad to have you return it to us at our expense.

123 Another Article—Lower Grade—We Remit

For the time being we are out of (name of article), and we cannot tell exactly when our

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

supply will be replenished. Rather than keep you waiting, we are sending the nearest thing to what you ordered that we have in stock. This is a slightly cheaper grade, and we are therefore remitting herewith the difference in price. We believe this is what you would want us to do. But if, for any reason, you cannot use the article we are sending, we shall be glad to have you return it to us at our expense.

124 Part Only, because Not Enough Money

The amount which you remitted was not quite sufficient to cover the entire amount of the bill. We have therefore left out of this shipment (quantity and article omitted). We felt that it would be more satisfactory to you if we did this rather than write for the balance due and thus keep the whole shipment waiting several days. Doubtless you will be making up another order in the near future, and you can then include the omitted item.

125-129 For additional paragraphs

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

SENDING WITH CHANGE IN METHOD OF SHIPMENT

130 Too Heavy to Go By Express—Cheaper by Freight

When we had completed packing your goods, we found that they were heavy enough to make a sufficiently large freight shipment. We have, therefore, taken the liberty to send them in this way instead of by express, as you suggested. The charges will be considerably less, and we feel sure you will approve our action.

131 Cannot Send by Parcel Post, because of Regulation

Post office regulations make it impossible for us to send your goods by parcel post. We have therefore taken the liberty of forwarding them to you by (express or freight). We feel sure you will approve of our action, as it would have kept you waiting some time had we first asked you for further shipping instructions.

132 Not Enough Money—Therefore Sent Collect

In checking over your remittance we find that you did not make allowance for carriage charges. Rather than delay the shipment, we have taken the liberty of deviating from your shipping instructions. The goods are going forward today by (freight or express), charges collect.

133 We Are Ordering Sent Direct from the Factory

Our warehouse stock of (name of article) is exhausted just at present. In order not to keep you waiting a minute longer than necessary we have sent word to the factory to ship your goods direct. They should reach you in a very few days, almost as soon as if they were coming from our own warehouse.

134-139 For additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

MONEY SENT—NOT ENOUGH

140 To Prepay Postage

The amount you remitted is just sufficient to cover the cost of the goods, without including postage. Since it will be a saving to you to have this package sent by parcel post instead of by express collect, we are withholding shipment until we receive the amount to cover postage charges (insert amount).

141 If You Want the More Expensive Article

It is impossible for us to supply you with the exact style of (name of article) which you ordered. However, we have another article (Price List No.....), which is very similar in design but a trifle more expensive. We do not feel like taking the liberty of sending this without first securing your permission. However, if you think this article will meet your needs, kindly forward the difference in price, (insert amount), and we shall see that shipment is made at once.

142 Because We Sent More Expensive Article

In the shipment to you which has left our house today we included a slightly more expensive type of (name of article) than the one you ordered, which we could not supply. We felt sure you would rather have us do this than keep you waiting possibly several weeks before our fresh supply comes in. If the article proves not to be what you want, after you have examined it, you can return it to us at our expense. If, however, you decide to keep it, kindly remit the difference in price (insert amount).

143 On Account of Changes in Prices

On some items it is impossible to keep our price list completely up to date, because of the frequent changes in the market. This happens to be true of the (name of article)

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

included in your present order. The price has advanced from (unit price to unit price), and we must therefore ask you to send the difference, or (total amount due), upon receipt of which shipment will be made at once.

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

144 On Account of Your Mistake

In checking over the amount you remitted, we find you have made a slight mistake. The full remittance to cover the goods you ordered should be (insert amount), whereas you have sent only (insert amount). We realize that this is simply an oversight on your part, and just as soon as we receive the difference, (insert amount), the goods will be forwarded to you at once.

145-149 For additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

MONEY SENT—TOO MUCH

150 Mistake of Calculation on Your Part

In checking over the amount of your remittance, we find you have sent us more than enough money to cover the cost of the goods. We are, therefore, returning the balance (insert amount).

151 Ordered from Old Price Sheet—Price Lowered

Your order was apparently made up from an old price sheet, as you have remitted in accordance with prices which have since been lowered. We are sending you a copy of our latest price sheet, in order that your files may be up to date, and we are also returning the amount which this revision of prices leaves due you (insert amount).

152 Because We Sent Collect

The amount you remitted for carriage charges was not quite sufficient to cover these. Rather than keep you waiting until you could send us the full amount, we have forwarded the goods collect, and we are returning herewith the full amount you sent for this purpose (insert amount).

153 Because We Sent Cheaper Way

After we had packed your goods, we found they could go just as well by parcel post as by express. We took the liberty, therefore, to send them in that way, and we are returning herewith the difference in carriage charges (insert amount) which we have saved you.

154-159 For additional paragraphs

ACKNOWLEDGING ORDERS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

THE BILL

160 Sending the Bill

The bill accompanies (this letter, the goods).

161 Bill Differs from Prices on Your Order

You will notice that the amount of the bill does not exactly correspond with the amount which you figured in your order. This is due to a change in the price (name of article) which now sells at (unit price).

162-169 For additional paragraphs

GUARANTEE

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

170 General

That you will be well pleased with the quality of these goods, we are thoroughly confident. If there is anything at all in connection with the shipment that puzzles or displeases you, let us know at once and we shall see that the matter is promptly straightened out to your complete satisfaction.

171 Absolute

If you find on examination that the goods we are sending you are not exactly as represented, or if they do not completely measure up to your expectations in every way, ship them back to us at our expense and we will refund every cent of your money. Can we do more?

172-199 For additional order paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CHAPTER V

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS THAT CUT COSTS

Form letters fit naturally into order correspondence. Many concerns use simply a postcard as a combined acknowledgment and notice of shipment. Other houses have printed slips or duplicated letters which answer the same purpose. The scope of the printed card or slip and the duplicated letter, however, is somewhat narrowed by the fact that these are all less flexible than a series of form paragraphs. Their use is limited, it is evident, to instances where it is necessary to cover only one point, or perhaps some combination of points that are constantly recurring.

A self-evident but often disregarded rule is, to use a form letter in order correspondence only when it is specifically applied to the case in hand. A sentence or paragraph having nothing to do with one customer's individual problem will at least confuse him; more than that, it is likely to give a bad impression of your methods of doing business. If, on the other hand, you send him a letter which fails to tell completely how you have gone about handling the order, it will cause irritation and perhaps the loss of a customer for the future. When the form letter does apply, however, it is by far the most economical method that is available of answering those routine parts of your correspondence which bulk large under a more or less limited number of common headings.

The letters given with this chapter were based on the successful analysis prepared by the manager of a retail-by-mail business where the paragraph idea has also been adopted with satisfactory results. Rounded out by comparison with the favorite order letters which are used in half a dozen different kinds of concerns, the series fairly covers the field of order form letters in the average business.

Have you ever thought of this?

Where the complete form letter is at a disadvantage

ORDER FORM LETTERS

		Used during Week of Month of	Total
1100-1149 Goods being sent	1100 Sending, simply		
	1101 Sending part, not enough money for rest		
	1102 Ordered sent from factory direct		
	1103 Too much money sent, rest returned		
	1150 We never carried, credit order		
1150-1199 Goods not being sent	1151 We never carried, cash order		
	1152 We no longer carry, credit order		
	1153 We no longer carry, cash order		
	1154 Require cash in advance		
1155-1199 Goods not being sent	1155 Out of stock, holding order on file		
	1156 Out of stock, not holding order, credit order		
1157-1199 Goods not being sent	1157 Out of stock, not holding order, cash order		
1158-1199 Goods not being sent	1158 Amount of money sent not sufficient		

FIGURE 13: Economy in the use of form letters is secured by the help of this form. Whenever a letter is sent out, a tallymark is placed in the "used" column. At the end of

a month you will have a basis for judging how many of each letter you will need to have duplicated. It's a foolish waste of money to have more form letters on hand than you need.

Note that each of these letters acknowledges the receipt of the order and takes up in addition only one point—in one case a request for a cash payment; in another, mention of the omission of part of the goods because the remittance failed to cover the entire cost; in a third, notice to the effect that a line of goods has been discontinued; and so on. Whenever several of these points come up in connection with the same order, the form letter is set aside and a special letter is dictated from the form paragraph book. Where a decidedly personal situation exists, not even the paragraphs suffice. But the number of letters which filter through to special dictation is insignificant.

This is important in using form letters

To be thoroughly economical in using these form letters, you must determine with approximate accuracy how many of each kind you need in a week or month. This office manager made his original analysis and estimate by checking back through his correspondence files for two months. You can do the same, or you can have your stenographer put a checkmark in the blank space left for the purpose on the list of order form letters (Figure 13) whenever you use one of the letters.

How one manager analyzed his letters

Taking the results of this study for a period covering a month or more, you can easily tell which of the letters you need to have duplicated in large quantities. Perhaps you will find you use enough of six or seven of the letters so that it is profitable to have a supply of them on hand, ready for mailing as soon as a typist fills in the name and address.

But be sure you avoid the mistake of one Kansas manager. He had his office boy run off 1,000 copies of a letter, only to find out afterward that he used scarcely a copy a day of that particular form. The duplicated lot lay in his stock room accumulating dust for nine months. At the end of that time the remainder—more than 700—were thrown into the waste basket because they were too much soiled to send to customers.

Mistakes like this are costly

A wholesale executive, having made careful estimates, has set maximum and minimum limits for his duplicated letters. He also provides a double check against ever being caught out of stock on any form. This he accomplishes by devoting sections in his own desk tickler, as well as in that of his stenographer, to the various form letters.

*A card that
watches the
supplies*

Each letter has a separate card, which shows how long the supply is fairly sure to last. The cards are filed in the stenographer's record to come up 20 days in advance of the limit; and in the executive's file to come up 10 days in advance. When the card comes up in the stenographer's file she investigates, perhaps has the maximum supply run off, and again forwards the card. The emergency card in the executive's tickler is an added safeguard against a shortage.

*One method of
handling
"fill-ins"*

The effectiveness of your duplicated letter is greatly increased if the fill-ins are made accurately and neatly, with perfect alignment, and with ribbons that match the color of ink used on the manifolding machine. One company has solved the fill-in difficulty in its order department by using purple ink throughout the body of the letter, and having nothing but red ribbons on the typists' machines. This method is, of course, perfectly obvious to the man who understands how form letters are made; but it does not affect in any way the company's trade with the farmers and housewives to whom the majority of its letters go.

If you find that you do not have enough use for a particular form to warrant running it off in large quantities, have your stenographer copy it entire whenever it is needed. This method obviously does away with the fill-in difficulty, and gives the letter a more personal effect. Some concerns find it well to have no duplicated letters at all, merely keeping its complete letter forms with its paragraphs and giving each form over to be copied on the typewriter as it is needed. If the class of your customers is uniformly high, and each order amounts to a considerable sum, this plan may prove best in your own business.

INDEX TO ORDER LETTERS

GOODS ARE BEING SENT

1100	Sending, simply	PAGE	92
1101	Sending part, not enough money for rest	PAGE	92
1102	Ordered sent from factory direct	PAGE	92
1103	Too much money sent—rest being returned	PAGE	93
1104-1149	Use these numbers for additional order letters	PAGE	93

**Constant use of this
Index will help you
to memorize the
paragraph numbers**

GOODS ARE NOT BEING SENT

1150	We never carried—credit order	PAGE	96
1151	We never carried—cash order	PAGE	96
1152	We no longer carry—credit order	PAGE	96
1153	We no longer carry—cash order	PAGE	97
1154	Require cash—in advance	PAGE	97
1155	Out of stock—holding order on file	PAGE	97
1156	Out of stock—not holding order—credit order	PAGE	98
1157	Out of stock—not holding order—cash order	PAGE	98
1158	Amount of money sent not sufficient	PAGE	98
1159-1199	For additional order letters	PAGE	98

In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

ORDER LETTERS

GOODS ARE BEING SENT

1100 Sending, Simply

Thank you for your order of the (date).

I have seen that your goods were carefully packed and shipped. They should reach you now in (two or more) days. Let me know if they do not come promptly, or if you have any questions to ask about them.

I am confident that you will be thoroughly satisfied with this shipment. I am therefore looking forward to other orders from you in the near future. How may we serve you further?

1101 Sending Part—Not Enough Money for Rest

Thank you for your order of the (date).

I have taken pains to have the goods packed and shipped just as you directed. However, since the amount which you remitted was not quite sufficient to cover the cost and carriage charges, I had the packers omit (quantity and name of article omitted). The difference which will make the total remittance correct is (amount). Just as soon as you send me this amount I will see that the omitted goods are sent to you without delay.

I thought you would want me to omit some of the goods rather than write for the balance and keep the whole shipment waiting some time.

1102 Ordered Sent from Factory Direct

Thank you for your order of the (date).

TIME-SAVING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have written to the factory which makes these goods for us and asked them to send your shipment direct. It will reach you promptly, almost as soon as if it were coming from our own wareroom.

Note Changes in Phrasing Here

If there is any delay, or if you have any questions to ask, write me at once. I feel a personal interest in seeing you satisfied and pleased.

1103 Too Much Money Sent—Rest Being Returned

Thank you for your order of the (date).

The amount of money which you sent was more than enough to cover the cost and carriage charges. I am returning you the difference, (amount).

The goods have been packed and shipped to you today, and I am confident that you will be pleased with them. Don't fail to let me know, however, if anything should appear incorrect.

1104-1149 Use these numbers for additional order letters

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

TIME-SAVING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

GOODS ARE NOT BEING SENT

1150 We Never Carried—Credit Order

Thank you for your order of the (date).

I am afraid there is some mistake, however, as we do not sell these goods and have never carried them. I am having the sales department send you a catalog, which contains a list of everything we handle, with the description and price.

In this list, I hope, you will find just the thing to supply some need. I am sorry we cannot meet your request, but shall give prompt attention to your further orders.

1151 We Never Carried—Cash Order

Thank you for your order of the (date).

I am afraid there is some mistake, however, as we do not sell these goods and have never carried them. I am having the sales department send you a catalog, which contains a list of everything we handle, with the description and price.

I hope you will find in this list just the thing to supply some need. I am sorry we cannot meet your request, but shall give prompt attention to your further orders. The money you sent is returned in this letter.

1152 We No Longer Carry—Credit Order

Your order of the (date) has just come in and I thank you for it.

I am sorry to have to tell you, however, that we no longer carry this line. I am having the sales department send you a copy of our latest catalog, revised to date. In this list, I hope, you will find just the thing to supply some need.

I wish there were some way in which I could be of greater service to you at this time. Please let me know if there is.

TIME-SAVING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1153 We No Longer Carry—Cash Order

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

Your order of the (date) has just come in and I thank you for it.

I am sorry to have to tell you, however, that we no longer carry this line. I am having the sales department send you a copy of our latest catalog, revised to date. In this list, I hope, you will find just the thing to supply some need.

The money which you sent is going back to you in this letter.

I wish there were some way in which I could be of greater service to you at this time. Please let me know if there is.

1154 Require Cash in Advance

I have just received your order of the (date) and thank you for it.

We make it a rule to sell only for cash, and for this reason we request all of our customers to include the money with their orders.

The quick turns of capital which such a policy enables us to make are one of the reasons why it is possible for us to sell our goods cheaply. I know you would not want me to make an exception to this policy for you.

Your order amounts to (amount). Please mail this sum to me today. An addressed envelop is enclosed for your convenience.

I am holding your goods ready to ship the day your remittance reaches us.

1155 Out of Stock—Holding Order on File

Thank you for your order of the (date).

We are out of these goods for a few days, but our stock will be replenished about (date).

I am placing your order on file in my desk, and will take personal care to see your shipment forwarded the day we get the new stock.

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

1156 Out of Stock—Not Holding Order—Credit Order

Thank you for your order of the (date).

We are temporarily out of these goods, and I cannot tell you definitely just when our stock will be replenished. Since it is more than likely that there will be a delay of several weeks, I doubt if you will wish me to keep your order on file. If you want the goods at the later time, will you please reorder?

1157 Out of Stock—Not Holding Order—Cash Order

Thank you for your order of the (date).

We are temporarily out of these goods, and I cannot tell you definitely just when our stock will be replenished. Since it is more than likely that there will be a delay of several weeks, I doubt if you will wish me to keep your order on file.

The money which you sent, therefore, is coming back to you in this letter.

If you want the goods at the later time, will you please reorder?

1158 Amount of Money Sent Not Sufficient

I have just received your order of the (date) and thank you for it.

The amount of money which you sent was not quite enough to cover the cost and carriage charges. The difference is (amount), which I will ask you to send me. An addressed envelop is enclosed for your convenience.

I am holding the goods packed and ready to ship just as soon as I get your letter.

1159-1199 For additional order letters

TIME-SAVING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CHAPTER VI

CUTTING THE COST OF ADJUSTING COMPLAINTS

The new sales manager for a manufacturing clothier was searching to find the reason why some of the company's customers had become dissatisfied and placed their orders with other concerns. Running through the correspondence files for several months back he found carbon records to show that one dealer had complained four times about the same difficulty, and on each occasion had received an impersonal, stereotyped reply to the effect that his complaint would be investigated at once. Through neglect the complaint had dropped there; finally the customer became disgusted and very naturally transferred the whole of an annual business of more than \$4,000 to a rival firm.

This method cost \$4,000 a year

The first step which the new sales manager took was to insist on the establishment of a complaint department. One man devoted his entire attention to analyzing and answering complaint letters. The causes were more thoroughly investigated than ever before, so that within five months the volume of this part of the correspondence was cut almost in half. In the case of complaints which could not be eliminated, the causes were classified and a comparative record kept of the number of complaints under each heading. Replies were then standardized by using form paragraphs.

Cutting complaint correspondence in two

Nothing is more appreciated by the average customer than a fair attitude in adjusting claims. The complaint department is the emery that grinds away the friction in business dealings. If a man has interest enough to "get mad" about the way you have treated him and tell you about it, he is a customer worth keeping. If your service or your goods give him any cause for complaint, it is to your interest not only to conciliate him, but to see that the same thing does not happen to a dozen other customers. He has put his finger on an error in

*Letters that
don't "get
mad"*

your plan of doing business. Complaints point the way to fuller service. One concern whose annual business is large never thinks of questioning the correctness of a complaint—until afterward.

The easiest way to make your complaining customer a better friend is to admit frankly that you were wrong—if you were; and do what he wants you to—which is usually right. If he happens to be wrong, an open-minded attitude on your side will do more than any argument to win him over.

Consequently, it is essential to avoid the appearance of set forms and phrases in replying to complaints. At first thought it would seem as though this made the use of form paragraphs difficult. As a matter of fact, however, the form paragraph has been found especially valuable in this department, because it puts a cool head in the place of an angry one.

*How to analyze
complaints*

Analysis will show you that similar complaints inevitably occur day after day. The goods, for instance, were not received. There are obviously just reasons for this fact. The first possibility is that they have not been shipped; the second, that they have been shipped but have not yet had time to reach the customer; the third, that they have been lost or delayed on the way.

When a complaint about failure to receive goods comes to you, it is usually easy to find which of these three reasons is the cause, and to proceed to explain matters in a logical paragraph which touches on every point in a courteous tone.

*Another advan-
tage of form
letters*

Working out a complaint system requires first that you thoroughly analyze the difficulties which often come up, and carefully work out a "one best" series of paragraphs. Besides the assurance that every letter will receive a courteous reply, this enables the executive to have the records kept under the same heads and so to know which departments are most frequently at fault.

Following the analysis on page 63 made by the wholesale clothier, which checks closely with those used in various other lines, most complaints fall under two general headings. In one class are the instances where the quantity of goods received by the customer is wrong, and in the other class examples of where the goods have been received, but the quality fails to suit—they are not what the customer ordered or expected, or they are

damaged. Besides the varieties of complaints that fall under these two main headings, a few miscellaneous difficulties constantly recur.

When you receive a complaint about any one of these difficulties, half a dozen things may be at fault and it is your business to select the one right explanation. However, the number of explanations which are required is really not very large.

One firm receives on the average 65 complaints every day. Of these 40, or more than 61%, are answered by the use of form paragraphs. In a still larger concern, which sells thousands of different articles, 85% of all complaints are so answered.

"Frankly," said the chief correspondent in this concern, "I believe our letters are more effective, and more personal, than if the average correspondent dictated every reply in full."

Here is an ordinary type of complaint, picked from the day's mail in a big sales office:

I sent you an order two weeks ago for a Water Heater No. 125-A in your catalog, and a Cream Separator No. C-16. The cream separator got here a couple of days ago, but the address on the label was wrong and I didn't get it from the railroad till today. The gas range didn't come at all. If your house always does business like that I don't want to do business with you.

Glancing through this letter the correspondent notes two distinct complaints that call for an answer: (1) a delay due to wrong address; (2) a purchase not received. He must satisfy both complaints and, regardless of the blame or of his own feelings, must mollify the customer for his just discontent. He, therefore, jots down on the slip attached to the letter the following instructions for the typist to follow:

- 12.....Sixteenth
- 232.....No. 125-A Water Heaters
- 265.....
- 62.....

When the letter comes back to be signed, it fully and tactfully replies to the complaint, and leaves the impres-

*Paragraphs
that answer
85% of the
complaints*

*How do you
handle "kicks"
like this?*

*Form para-
graphs handle
this*

How the finished letter looks

sion that the house has been glad to make immediate and personal adjustment:

Your letter of the sixteenth has just reached us, and we note that you have received only part of your order.

Since our stock of No. 125-A Water Heaters was temporarily exhausted, we shipped the other item on your order without waiting to receive our fresh supply. We thought you would want us to do this, rather than delay the entire shipment. We expect to have our stock replenished in a few days, and shall take pains to see that your order is filled promptly.

Keeping the personal tone

Your address has been changed on our records to correspond with the directions in your letter.

Feel assured that we always want to do everything we can to give our customers complete satisfaction.

When you have developed your form paragraph series, you may sometimes find it well to dictate a personal start or close, to show the customer that you are really giving his individual problem careful attention. But the big arguments that you have to make for your service, the tactful turn of a word or sentence that smooths the customer's ruffled temper—these details will have been worked out in advance.

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Constant use of this index will help you to memorize the paragraph numbers

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COMPLAINT PARAGRAPHS

OPENERS

10 We Frankly Apologize

Your letter of the (date) has just reached us, and we want to say frankly that we owe you an apology.

11 You Have Not Received Goods

Your letter of the (date) has just reached us, and we note you have not yet received your goods.

12 You Have Not Received All Goods Ordered

Your letter of the (date) has just reached us, and we note that you have received only part of your order.

13 You Have Received Goods, But Damaged

We are indeed sorry to hear that goods on your order were damaged when they reached you.

14 You Have Received Wrong Goods

Your letter of the (date) has just come in, and we are sorry to hear that the shipment of goods which you have received was not the goods ordered by you.

15 Your Goods Are Unsatisfactory

We are sorry to hear that you have found the goods on your order not exactly what you wanted.

16 Simple Acknowledgment of Letter

Your letter of the (date) has just reached us.

In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CLOSERS

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

60 Future Mistakes Will Be Avoided

We shall do everything in our power to see that such a mistake does not happen again.

61 Regret Mistake and Believe Solution Satisfactory

More than we can say, we regret that this trouble should have occurred, and our effort has been to adjust the matter to your entire satisfaction.

62 We Want to Do All Possible

Feel assured that we always want to do everything we can to give our customers complete satisfaction.

63 What Solution Do You Suggest?

We want to be perfectly fair in handling this matter. What solution do you suggest?

64 Explanation Believed Satisfactory

We believe this explanation will prove entirely satisfactory to you.

65-69 For additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

QUALITY NOT WHAT WAS ORDERED

200 Shipping Department Mistake

Apparently our shipping room made the mistake in packing the goods, as we had your order correctly entered on our books. We have directed our shipping clerk to assemble a new shipment at once, to give your order special attention, and to see that it is right in every detail. Kindly return the incorrect shipment to us at our expense.

201 Order Department Mistake

The mistake was due to an entry error in our order department. Our shipping clerk has received instructions to assemble a new shipment at once, and we have taken special pains to see that it is correct in every detail. We ask you to return the incorrect shipment to us at our expense.

202 Our Records Right—We Are Refilling

Our records indicate that the correct goods were sent, and we cannot locate the place where the error was made. However, we are preparing a second shipment, and it is leaving our wareroom today. May we ask you to return the incorrect shipment to us at once, at our expense?

203-209 For additional paragraphs

ADJUSTING COMPLAINTS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

ADJUSTING COMPLAINTS

GOODS DAMAGED

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

210 Our Records Right—We Are Refilling

Before your order left our warehouse all the goods were carefully gone over to make sure that they were perfect in every respect. However, the item (items) you mentioned must have failed to catch the attention of our inspector. We are, therefore, having duplicate(s) packed and sent forward to you today. Kindly return the damaged goods to us, at our expense, as soon as possible.

211 Impossible for All Pieces to Be Perfect—We Are Refilling—Please Return

Considering the number of articles that pass through our shipping department in a day, it is impossible, even with thorough inspection, to see that all of them are absolutely perfect. Such must have been the trouble with the item (items) in your order. Our shipping department now has instructions to forward a duplicate (duplicates) to you today. Please return the damaged goods to us at our expense, and with as little delay as possible.

212 You Recover from the Railroad

The goods must have been damaged en route, as we have shipping papers to show that the carrier received them from us in perfect condition. You should, therefore, be able to recover the full amount of damages. Please take this matter up with the local claim department of the railroad. Also let us know if we shall bill you under another consignment of goods to take the place of those damaged.

213 We Will Recover for You from Railroad

The damage must have occurred en route, as the shipping papers in our files show that the carrier received the goods in perfect condition. If you will send us the papers which show the local agent's report on the exact

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

condition of the goods when you received them, we will at once take up the matter for you with the railroad and see that you recover the full amount.

214 Shall We Refill?

Will you kindly let us know whether we shall send other goods to take the place of those which you received?

215-219 For additional paragraphs

GOODS UNSATISFACTORYNote Changes In
Phrasing Here**220 You May Return**

As a general rule we have found it impossible to allow goods to be returned. You can see that if every one of our customers were allowed to return goods with which some personal reason made him dissatisfied, we should be unfair to ourselves. However, because of the special circumstances which you mention in your letter, we will make an exception for you. In returning these goods to us, please be sure that you send them by freight (express), charges prepaid (collect), to us at (address).

221 You May Not Return

We have found it impossible for us to allow our customers to inspect goods and then return them. You can easily see how the extra cost of handling such goods, unpacking them and putting them back in stock, as well as the extra expense in the bookkeeping and correspondence departments, would force us either to go out of business, or to raise the price on all our goods to cover this extra expense. We feel certain that you will be able to put these goods to use as you originally expected to, and we know positively they will give you excellent service.

222 Because Delayed Too Long—Return—Shipping Instructions

It is true that the causes for this delay were outside of our control. However, we feel your inconvenience as keenly as if we were to blame, and we value your satisfaction as our customer more than any small loss which may come to us on the transaction. You may return the goods, therefore, and at our expense. Kindly send them by freight (express) collect, to us at (address), and we will remit at once the balance due you.

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

223 Because Delayed Too Long—Can You Use Anyway?

You justly realize that the causes for this delay were beyond our control—in fact, we were not at all to blame in the matter. Since this is so, do you think it is right for us to assume all the loss incident to rehandling—if you are to return the goods to us—as well as the loss of profit on the sale, and the added possibility that the returned goods may be damaged in transit so we cannot sell them again? Are you quite sure that you cannot find use for the goods? Please think this over carefully before you reply

224-229 For additional paragraphs

ONLY PART OF GOODS RECEIVEDNote Changes in
Phrasing Here**230 Our Mistake—We Are Sending Rest**

It was purely an oversight on our part that all the goods were not included in the first shipment. Our shipping department now has instructions to pack these goods at once, and to rush delivery on them. Your order should therefore reach you within two or three days at the very latest.

231 Sent in Separate Shipments

You did not receive all your goods at one time because our shipping department found it advisable to make two shipments of them. Your second shipment should reach you now in a very short time—probably before this letter does. If there is any further delay, please let us know at once so that we can take such action as may seem advisable.

232 Temporarily Out of Stock—We Are Holding Order

Since our stock of (name of article) was temporarily exhausted, we shipped the other item (items) on your order without waiting to receive our fresh supply. We thought you would want us to do this rather than delay the entire shipment. We expect to have our stock replenished in a few days, and shall take pains to see that your order is filled promptly.

233 Permanently Out of Stock—We Have Returned Your Money

The reason the (name of article) was (were) not included in your shipment was that we no longer handle this class of goods. We notified you of this at the time we shipped the rest of your order, and enclosed in our letter a remittance for the difference which this omission made in your bill. If the letter and money failed to reach you, will you please notify us at once, so that we can make a further adjustment

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

NO GOODS RECEIVEDNote Changes in
Phrasing Here**240 Not Yet Time to Reach You**

We find on looking through the records of our shipping department that the goods left the wareroom on the (date). Therefore, it was hardly possible for them to have reached you at the time you wrote to us. If, however, they have not arrived by the time you receive this letter, will you please let us know at once, so that we may duplicate the shipment to you and start a tracer?

241 We Are Starting Tracer

Our records show that your goods left the wareroom on the (date). They should have reached you by this time. Occasionally, however, shipments are misplaced by the railroads, or unnecessarily delayed. We have started a tracer today to find out what the trouble is. If the goods cannot be located in four or five days, we shall not allow you to be delayed longer, but shall forward a duplicate shipment.

242 We Are Duplicating Shipment

Your goods left our wareroom on the (date), and should have reached you by this time. Apparently, however, they have been lost or delayed somewhere on the way. In order not to keep you waiting any longer we are duplicating the shipment. It should reach you now in a day or so. If both shipments should arrive, will you see that one of them is returned to us?

243 Order Never Received—We Are Filling

We have no record that your order ever reached us. It must have been lost in the mails, since it is improbable that it should have been misplaced after we received it. We have, therefore, considered the memorandum in your letter as an order, and special instructions

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

have been sent to the shipping department to rush your goods to you at once.

244 Order Received—Waiting Until Stock is Replenished

Your order was received, but our stock of (name of article) happened to be temporarily exhausted. As we expected a fresh supply in a very short time we did not notify you of the delay. Our supply has now been received (will be here in a day or so), and your goods will be forwarded just as soon as our shipping department can get them packed.

245 Order Received—We Want Cash With Order

We wrote you on the (date) in regard to your goods and stated that it is a rule in our firm always to require cash with the order. This is done purely for the benefit of the majority of our customers, so that we can maintain our uniformly low prices; for our business is conducted on so narrow a margin of profit that the expense of keeping books and collecting by mail would necessitate an increase in our prices. Our letter must have been lost, for which we are sorry, as it has caused you a delay. Send us your remittance (amount) today, and we will see that your goods are rushed to you at once.

246-249 For additional paragraphs

MISTAKE IN BILL

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

250 Our Fault—Sending New Bill

The mistake was due to a clerical error in our billing (shipping) department. We have made the correction on our books, and your revised bill accompanies this letter. Please destroy the incorrect statement which you now have.

251 Not a Mistake—Enclosing Revised List

The revised list (catalog) accompanying this letter will show you that the price of (name of article) is now (unit price). This accounts for the apparent discrepancy which you have mentioned.

252-259 For additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

ADJUSTING COMPLAINTS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

MISCELLANEOUS

260 Previous Complaint Not Answered—Not Received

Probably your other letter was lost on the way, as we never received it. We are sorry that you have been kept waiting for your answer, but we want you to know that it was not our fault that you failed to hear from us before.

261 Previous Complaint Not Answered—We Wrote—Letter Lost?

You have reason to wonder why you have not heard from us. We wrote you on the (date), answering your letter fully, but this reply of ours must have been lost on the way.

262 Previous Complaint Incompletely Answered

We tried to make our first letter clear and explicit, and we thought we had covered all the points. We are always glad, however, to have you call our attention to a question of this sort, for we want our customers to understand us perfectly.

263 Order Not Acknowledged—We Do Not Acknowledge

Your order was received by us on the (date) and entered for immediate shipment. We do not make a practice of acknowledging orders, as we find that most of our customers do not consider it necessary. The amount of postage saved in this way is a big sum at the end of the year, and this seemingly little economy is one of the factors that make it possible for us to maintain low prices on our goods.

264 Payment Not Acknowledged—We Wrote—Lost?

Your remittance never reached our office. It must have been lost on the way, possibly because of a defective address. If you will go to your local postmaster, he will supply you with a tracer, and probably the post office authorities can locate the lost letter. Unless

ADJUSTING COMPLAINTS

you remitted in currency you are not likely to lose any money even if the letter is not found, for a money order or check drawn in our favor could be redeemed only by us.

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

265 Address Wrong—We Are Changing

Your address has been changed on our records to correspond with the directions in your letter.

266-269 For additional miscellaneous complaint paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CHAPTER VII

FORM LETTERS THAT HANDLE COMPLAINTS

"Here I have a definite statement of the inefficiencies of my business, as they strike my customers," said one executive of a concern with a country-wide reputation, as he tossed a 5 by 8 card across his desk.

*Records that
watch
complaints*

On this card (Figure 14) the complaint department in this concern summarizes every month the number of complaint letters received, together with the department at fault. Day by day these incoming letters are tabulated and analyzed. The monthly summary shows the manager at a glance where carelessness or inefficiency is beginning to creep in.

"You see, in department 8," continued the executive, "the complaints suddenly jumped in June from an average of 10 or 12 each month to 54. Department 8 is the shipping room. We installed a new system there early in that month, and a lot of confusion was inevitable. Notice that in July complaints came down to 26; while in August, after the system had been put into thorough working order, the number dropped to 5, and that has been the average ever since—lower than it was before the change by about half."

*Keeping tab on
each depart-
ment*

"Now take the entry department, number 5, starting with May; 16 complaints. I did not consider that excessive, for we had a new clerk doing most of the work there. But you see in June and July the number was larger instead of smaller—it jumped to 23 and 29. I had to replace the new man we were trying out there with a careful clerk, and notice the change! The average now runs about 6, 6, 5, 6, 6, 4."

A simple report such as this is invaluable for the proprietor of any office or shop where much business is done by letter. Complaints index definitely the mistakes in business routine; moreover, in answering the letters of customers who are dissatisfied with your goods or service, the correspondent, by the tactful and personal

Standard letters meet many needs

handling of each case, can supplement in a very helpful way the work of the sales department.

For the routine complaints, and those in which only one point is brought up, you will find that you can have on your desk a series of standard letters which will cover many instances. The business man who is wise, however, always makes some extra provision to prevent careless use of a form letter to answer complaints it does not exactly fit. You may either dictate the numbers of the answering letters yourself or delegate the work to a thoroughly responsible correspondent.

Why typed letters are sometimes best

The weight of experience, moreover, is not to have your complaint letters manifolded. Better go to the added expense of having each one typed complete, as needed, rather than to lose a customer by a careless fill-in which will reveal at a glance the fact that you have answered a red-hot complaint with a stock reply.

The following series of complaint letters was based primarily on the analysis of one business man's correspondence. As checked and corrected by comparison with the complaint routine in several other progressive concerns, these letters will serve to answer the majority of complaints that confront the average business.

How one man uses form letters

Variations will be in details, rather than in the general analysis. One wholesale grocer, on checking over his own correspondence, has found that he receives a large number of complaints from his retail customers about spoiled cheeses. Experience has shown him that there are five reasons for this: they have grown soft, they have been gnawed by rats, changes in the weather have affected them, and so on. All of these causes fall under the general heading of goods damaged after leaving the house. The grocer has, however, developed for his own use a special series of five form letters. Whenever he receives a complaint of this sort, he quickly selects the right letter to be typed, and does not have to take the trouble of dictating separate replies every time.

You can likewise note quickly the variations from the analysis that arise in your own business. Strike out a phrase here and there if it fails to fit, or add a standard sentence or paragraph in the margin, as experience shows you it is necessary.

As you start to dictate, run through the index (Figure 15) and select the letter which answers the complaint in

REPORT OF COMPLAINTS

Department	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	TOTAL
1	1	0	2	1	1	1	3	2	0	1	2	1	15
2	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	1	1	0	3	3	14
3	6	4	6	3	3	3	3	5	3	4	6	5	51
4	4	0	3	2	4	8	5	6	3	2	0	3	40
5	8	9	4	11	16	(23)	(29)	6	5	6	6	4	127
6	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
7	8	2	5	0	0	8	4	3	0	0	3	4	37
8	11	12	12	10	12	(54)	26	5	6	5	4	6	163
9	1	0	0	1	2	2	2	0	2	1	0	0	11
10	7	7	7	6	7	4	3	7	5	2	7	1	63
11	6	5	1	1	1	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	26
12	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4
13	4	3	1	5	2	7	1	2	1	1	0	2	29
14	5	4	2	6	3	8	2	1	0	0	0	1	32
15	1	1	0	1	2	3	1	5	4	2	1	6	27
16	15	12	10	12	8	13	4	7	8	6	3	4	102
17	1	2	4	0	3	1	3	2	10	6	7	4	43
TOTAL	79	62	58	59	66	141	91	53	49	39	44	46	787

FIGURE 14: One executive finds this report especially helpful in following complaints. He can see at a glance just which departments are the worst offenders, and the totals indicate

the improvement made, if any. The circled figures call attention to glaring discrepancies and point out which conditions are the ones that need to be watched with particular care.

COMPLAINT FORM LETTERS

	INDEX	NUMBER USED	TOTAL
Quality of goods received			
Net what was ordered 1200-1209	1200 Shipping department's fault 1201 Order department's fault 1202 Mistake where? refilling 1203 Mistake where? return goods received and we will refill		
Damaged 1210-1219	1210 Mistake failed to catch our attention 1211 Mistake where? refilling 1212 Every piece cannot be perfect 1213 You recover from railroad 1214 We will recover for you		
Unsatisfactory 1220-1229	1220 You may return 1221 You may not return		
Quantity of goods received			
None 1230-1239	1230 Not yet time to reach you 1231 A tracer started 1232 Order not received 1233 Order not received; tell what it was, and we will fill		
Only part 1240-1249	1240 Our fault 1241 Rest out of stock		
Miscellaneous 1250-1259	1250 Address wrong 1251 Order not acknowledged We wrote 1252 Order not acknowledged We do not write 1253 Remittance not acknowledged We wrote 1254 Remittance not acknowledged We do not write		
Special 1260-1269			

FIGURE 15: Here's a form with a dual purpose. It serves as an index by which the correspondent can select at once the form letter which suits best the complaint to be answered.

It also helps keep tab on the number of each letter used thus indicating which letters you will need a large supply of, and which a smaller. This way you can avoid having an oversupply.

hand. On a slip attached to the customer's letter—you can use the same sheets for form letters and paragraphs—jot down its number, together with notations regarding the two or three necessary insertions.

At the same time you can put a checkmark in the "number used" column at the right. When you have "dictated" from the book for a few weeks, you will know where your complaints bulk and can direct your efforts at correction accordingly. In the space left blank at the bottom of the chart, note unusual complaints which the standard letters do not cover. This will serve you as a helpful guide in writing the letters that are peculiar to your own business.

*Building up
form para-
graphs*

INDEX TO COMPLAINT LETTERS

**Constant use of this
index will help you
to memorize the
paragraph numbers**

QUALITY OF GOODS RECEIVED

Not What Was Ordered

		PAGE
1200	Shipping department's fault	134
1201	Order department's fault	134
1202	Mistake where? Refilling	134
1203	Mistake where? Return goods received and we will refill	135
1204-1209	Use these numbers for additional complaint letters	135

Damaged

1210	Mistake failed to catch our attention	138
1211	Mistake where? Refilling	138
1212	Every piece cannot be perfect	138
1213	You recover from railroad	139
1214	We will recover for you	139
1215-1219	For additional letters	140

Unsatisfactory

1220	You may return	141
1221	You may not return	141
1222-1229	For additional letters	142

QUANTITY OF GOODS RECEIVED

None

1230	Not yet time to reach you	145
1231	A tracer started	145
1232	Order not received—filling—credit sale . .	145
1233	Order not received. Tell what it was and we will fill	146
1234-1239	For additional letters	146

Only Part

1240	Our fault	147
1241	Rest out of stock	147
1242-1249	For additional letters	147

MISCELLANEOUS

1250	Address wrong	150
1251	Order not acknowledged—we wrote	150

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

MISCELLANEOUS (*continued*)

	PAGE	Constant use of this index will help you to memorize the paragraph numbers
1252 Order not acknowledged, we do not write	150	
1253 Remittance not acknowledged—we wrote	151	
1254 Remittance not acknowledged—we do not write	151	
1255-1259 For additional complaint letters	151	

In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

COMPLAINT LETTERS

GOODS NOT WHAT WAS ORDERED

1200 Shipping Department's Fault

You have good reason to complain for getting the wrong goods on your order.

The fault, I find, rests entirely with us and I am having a readjustment made in our shipping department. The mistake has been corrected and a new shipment is going forward to you today. Please return the other goods at our expense.

I have taken personal care to set this difficulty right, and give you complete satisfaction. I am confident you will have no further trouble.

1201 Order Department's Fault

I was very sorry to hear that your goods, when they reached you, were not what you ordered.

The fault, I find, is entirely ours—the order department made a mistake in entering your order. I have had your original letter looked up in the files, and a second shipment to correspond with this order is going forward today. Please return the incorrect shipment to us at our expense.

I have gone into this difficulty personally for you and am confident that you will now find everything satisfactory.

1202 Mistake Where? Refilling

I was sorry to hear that the goods which you received were not what you ordered.

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

I cannot understand the reason, for I have gone over our records from beginning to end and they appear correct throughout.

Note Changes in Phrasing Here

In order that the difficulty may be settled to your complete satisfaction, however, I have had a new shipment made up, and it is being forwarded to you today. Please return the other goods to us at our expense.

This mistake has had my personal attention and I am confident that you will find everything arranged satisfactorily.

1203 Mistake Where? Return Goods Received and We Will Refill

I was sorry to learn that your goods, when they reached you, did not correspond with your order.

I have had our records gone over thoroughly and have not been able to find where the mistake crept in. However, the trouble must be straightened out to your satisfaction at once. Return at our expense the goods which you have received. Just as soon as they reach the house I will have a new and correct shipment made up and sent to you.

This order will receive my personal attention and you may be sure of perfect satisfaction.

1204-1209 Use these numbers for additional complaint letters

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

GOODS DAMAGED

1210 Mistake Failed to Catch Our Attention

I was sorry to hear that the goods, when they reached you, were not in perfect shape.

Our records show that they left the wareroom in first-class condition. The defect which you mention must have failed to catch the attention of our inspectors. In order not to make your delay in using the goods any longer than necessary, I have had a new shipment made up and sent to you today.

Kindly return the defective goods to us at our expense.

I am confident that this order will not give you any further trouble. Some few mistakes are certain to occur, but you may rest assured that we are always glad of the chance to rectify an oversight made by any department of our house.

1211 Mistake Where? Refilling

I was very sorry to hear that the goods in your shipment had been damaged when they reached you.

I have looked up the shipment in our records, and so far as I can find, the goods left us in first-class condition. Somewhere, however, there is a mistake that has escaped our notice and I am only too glad to have the chance to make it right.

Return the defective goods at our expense, and a new and perfect shipment will go forward to you at once.

I shall give this order my personal attention and you may count upon perfect satisfaction.

1212 Every Piece Cannot Be Perfect

I was sorry to hear that the goods in your shipment proved imperfect.

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

In spite of the care which we take to inspect all goods very carefully before they leave our wareroom, it is impossible to have every piece of this sort perfect. I am having your order refilled and sent to you today. Please return the defective goods at our expense.

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

I have made a special effort to see that this last shipment is perfect. You may count upon its being right.

1213 You Recover from Railroad

I was very sorry to hear that the goods on your order were damaged when you received them.

When they left our wareroom the shipment was packed in perfect condition, as our receipt from the railroad shows. The goods were, therefore, damaged on the way. Your records of course show the exact condition in which you received the goods. Please take the question up with the local claim department of the carrier.

Under the circumstances you should have no trouble in recovering the value of the damaged goods.

May I send you another shipment at once to replace this one?

1214 We Will Recover For You

I was very sorry to hear that the goods you ordered were damaged when you received them.

The damage must have taken place on the way, for the shipping papers in our files show that they left the wareroom in first-class order.

If you will send us the papers which show exactly the condition in which the shipment reached you, we will take up the question for you with a view to recovering damages from the carrier.

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

Is it your desire to have another consignment
of goods billed you at once to take the place
of this one? We will gladly do this.

1215-1219 For additional letters

GOODS UNSATISFACTORY

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

1220 You May Return

I was very sorry to hear that the goods on your order did not suit you after you received them.

Every one of our customers is to be thoroughly satisfied with the goods which we sell, and in no instance do I want a customer to keep goods which he does not like.

Please tell me more definitely just what was the trouble. The reason that I ask is that I aim to make changes to suit our customers wherever possible.

Return the goods at our expense. Your suggestion will more than repay us.

In this and every future order, your satisfaction will dictate our course.

1221 You May Not Return

I was very sorry to hear that the goods on your order did not exactly suit you when you received them.

Now, I am going to talk with you just as I would if you were sitting here in my office. You know from the low prices we offer that our margin of profit on things we sell is very small. If we were to take back goods in such instances as this, you understand that the extra cost of handling, packing and unpacking, putting the goods back in the store room, the extra carriage charges, and so on, would quickly eat up our profits and work a hardship on every one of our customers. We would have to raise prices all along the line.

This is why we make it a rule to describe everything fully to our friends and then not take back goods unless they are actually damaged. You would not, I am sure, want me

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

to make an exception for you under the present circumstances.

I have read your letter very carefully. I feel that when you come to use these goods they will be more satisfactory than you had expected; and the values themselves are real bargains.

Write and tell me fairly if you don't feel the same way that I do.

1222-1229 For additional letters

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

GOODS WERE NOT RECEIVEDNote Changes in
Phrasing Here**1230 Not Yet Time to Reach You**

I have your letter in which you say that the goods on your order of (date) have not yet arrived.

These goods were shipped to you on the (date). You will see, therefore, that they had not yet had time to reach you when you wrote. They should, however, be there by the time this letter comes to you.

I want you to let me know if there is any further delay, and if so, we will make special efforts, you may be sure, to serve you promptly.

1231 A Tracer Started

I have your letter in which you state that you have not yet received your goods.

The goods were sent from our wareroom on the (date) and should have reached you before this. I am having the railroad start a tracer to find out where the shipment has been held up. I should hear from it within four or five days at the most.

Please let me know at once if the goods arrive in the meantime.

I am giving the shipment my personal attention and I shall see that it is settled promptly to your complete satisfaction.

1232 Order Not Received—Filling—Credit Sale

Your letter, in which you state that the goods on your order have not arrived, has just reached me.

I have had our files searched very carefully, but the order department has no record of ever having received the order.

You doubtless want the goods as promptly as possible, so I have considered your letter an

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

order. The shipping department is sending the goods to you today.

I am very sorry that you have been put to this inconvenience and delay, and I want you to write me at once if this shipment fails to arrive promptly.

1233 Order Not Received. Tell What It Was and We Will Fill

I have your letter in which you say that the goods on your order have not yet arrived.

Our files have been searched very carefully, but we have no record of ever having received the order. Please write at once and tell me exactly what the items were which you ordered. I am sorry that this occurrence has caused you inconvenience and delay. However, as soon as your reply reaches me, I will personally take care to see that the goods are sent to you at once.

1234-1239 For additional letters

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

ONLY PART OF GOODS RECEIVED

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

1240 Our Fault

You are perfectly justified in complaining because you failed to receive all of your goods. The oversight was purely our own.

I am having the other items packed and sent to you today. They should reach you now in the course of about (number) days.

I have given this shipment my personal attention and am confident you will now find everything satisfactory.

1241 Rest Out of Stock

I have gone through our records to find out why you received only part of the goods which you ordered.

The reason is that we were temporarily out of stock on the goods which you failed to receive. The shipping department filled part of your order rather than hold up the entire shipment until the fresh supply of the other goods was received. We felt that this is what you would want done.

The rest of your order is on file and we will fill it just as soon as the goods reach our wareroom.

I am giving your order my personal attention, and you will find the rest of your shipment coming through very shortly.

1242-1249 For additional letters

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

MISCELLANEOUS

1250 Address Wrong

I have just received your letter in which you say that we have your address wrong on our records. I have had it corrected according to your directions and your future orders will be handled accordingly.

Thank you for calling my attention to the error.

I hope you have not been put to any inconvenience by it.

1251 Order Not Acknowledged—We Wrote

I have your letter in which you say that you received no acknowledgment of the order you sent us recently.

On looking through the files I find that we wrote you on the (date), the day we received your order. The letter, therefore, seems to have been lost on the way. Please consider this letter an acknowledgment and accept our thanks for the order.

I find that your goods were (will be) shipped on (date). Let us know if there is any attention which I can give to the matter in your interest.

1252 Order Not Acknowledged—We Do Not Write

I have your letter in which you state that you received no acknowledgment of your order.

The reason is that we do not make a practice of acknowledging orders unless some trouble or delay appears in filling them. We find that this saves considerable postage each day and in the end is thus of advantage to our customers in lower prices.

I have gone through our records, and find that your goods were (will be) shipped on (date). Let me know if there is any further

STANDARD COMPLAINT LETTERS

attention which I can give the order in your interest, or if there is any further need you wish supplied at this time.

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

1253 Remittance Not Acknowledged—We Wrote

I have just read your letter in which you mention that you received no acknowledgment of your remittance of (amount).

On looking through the files I find that we wrote you on the (date), the day we received the money. Our letter must have gone astray on the way.

Please consider this letter your acknowledgment. We always endeavor to acknowledge and ship promptly, as in this way we can best win your steady trade.

1254 Remittance Not Acknowledged—We Do Not Write

I have just read your letter in which you mention that you received no acknowledgment of your remittance of (amount).

The reason is that we do not make a practice of acknowledging payments unless specially requested. Checks, when indorsed, form their own receipts, and it has been our experience that currency and money orders are very rarely lost in the mails. The saving in correspondence bills is an item in keeping our prices low to you.

Please consider this letter an acknowledgment and allow us to serve you again.

1255-1259 For additional complaint letters

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CHAPTER VIII

STANDARD PARAGRAPHS THAT COLLECT

Fingering through the little pile of cards that the tickler file had brought up for his consideration that day, the collection man in a wholesale grocery noticed the name of a small-town dealer who was usually very prompt in paying. Already one letter had failed to bring either the remittance or the dealer's reason. Feeling that some extraordinary cause must be at the bottom of this delay, the collection man "dictated" a letter from the paragraph book.

How the collection man "gets action"

The completed letter, which follows, makes an urgent demand for a remittance or at least the courtesy of a reply explaining non-payment, but contains nothing to offend the customer:

24.....
21.....seventeenth
301.....
300.....third
75.....

There must be some good reason or we should have had a letter.

This is the letter that pulled

Why has our letter of the seventeenth brought no reply from you?

If payment is impossible now, the only fair thing is for you to write us or call at our office at once and take up this matter with us.

Enclosed is a memorandum of the bill. Payment, as you will notice, was due on the third.

Let us hear from you at once.

*Adapting the
letter to the
need*

Far more annoying to the collection man than this type of debtor is the customer with whom delay is a habit. Statements slip into pigeonholes in his desk, and routine collection letters are treated with scarcely more regard than the circulars in the day's mail. It is the policy of one keen collection manager, who is quick at "spotting" such debtors in his list, to assume a tone throughout his letter series which gradually teaches them to pay him promptly.

The following is the second letter "dictated" from the paragraph book to a customer habitually slow:

*This letter
solves a difficult
problem*

20.....	\$76.46; 18 days
303.....	
325.....	
75.....	
76.....	May 1

Your bill for \$76.46 is now 18 days overdue.

We don't want to think you are trying to evade payment. However, that is the conclusion we shall have to come to if you continue to leave our letters lying on your desk without a reply.

*A "stock"
letter that fits*

You want to keep your credit perfectly clear. The only sure way to do this, as you well know, is to pay your bills promptly as they fall due. Any delay is liable to cause a bad impression, which you will find it very difficult to get rid of later on.

Let us hear from you at once.

We must have your definite reply by May 1.

However careless the debtor's reading of such a letter has been, the ultimatum mentioned in the last line is likely to cling in his mind and bother him. So closely does the letter fit him that he feels himself constantly under the collection manager's scrutiny.

When he is writing to women, the collection man generally recognizes that inexperience and forgetfulness

frequently underlie delays, and that women often lack the methods which remind a man to treat his obligations in a businesslike way. They are more apt, also, to feel affronted if they are approached with an awkward or inopportune request for payment. All these points must be considered in writing effective letters.

Finding that one of his women customers paid her bills, but paid them about when she chose, the collection manager of a retail dry goods store set to work and wrote a second letter as follows:

320.....	
300.....	your; the first
322.....	\$6.50
73.....	

Prompt payment of bills by our customers makes it possible for us to sell goods more cheaply. When our money comes in regularly on the date due, we don't have to make an allowance for extra interest charges and add a percentage to all selling prices to cover the amount. You benefit by the low prices.

Better than a dictated letter

Enclosed is a memorandum of your bill. Payment, as you will notice, was due on the first of last month.

Remember that we have hundreds of small accounts like this. You will hardly miss the \$6.50 which you pay us today; but if you should delay, and a few others, too, it would soon mount up to a big sum for us.

Kindly arrange to call and make this payment promptly.

This letter gives a logical reason for the demand for payment—the low prices which result—and yet contains nothing at which the customer is liable to take offense, or which is not absolutely correct.

Perhaps you have seen customers like this

Another class of debtor that you will find on your list occasionally is the man who is on the border line between good and bad credit—the man whose fortunes or reputation have been going against him of late. Following is a letter—the second in the series—to such a debtor.

Reaching a "slow-pay"

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*Writing a
letter with
seven words*

The collection man quickly manages to come up to the decisive point:

23.....	once; fifteenth
77.....	
325.....	
332.....	
75.....	

We have written you once about your bill of the fifteenth. No reply has been received from you.

Kindly give this matter your immediate attention.

*Driving the
point home*

You want to keep your credit perfectly clear. The only sure way to do this, as you well know, is to pay your bills promptly as they fall due. Any delay is liable to cause a bad impression, which you will find it very difficult to get rid of later on.

We extend credit to our customers as a special convenience. If you abuse this privilege by not paying your bills promptly when they fall due, we shall be obliged to deny you the use of the privilege of charging your purchases in the future.

*Handling a
difficult case*

Let us hear from you at once.

The decorator, the service specialist, and especially, of course, the professional man, must recognize that his collections for some reason or other seem a more delicate matter than where merchandise has changed hands, and requires more careful treatment. In most cases, however, the insurance or the legal or the medical client is personally known to the creditor, and collection paragraphs can, for this reason, be picked in such a way as to fit the individual case very closely. Immediately following is a letter which was sent by two doctors, who are brothers in business together, to a client who has offered as an excuse for not coming to time, his absolute inability since the illness to save a cent more than \$10 above his regular expenses. You'll admit that it says just what it should, and says it well.

ACCOUNT-COLLECTING PARAGRAPHS

22.....difficulty, and inability to meet your payments to us	<i>How the letter was dictated</i>
315.....\$10; \$15; April 15	
73.....	
75.....	

We are very sorry to hear of your difficulty and inability to meet your payments to us.

We want to help you out as much as possible. Send us \$10 now. For the remainder, \$15, we have extended the date to April 15, when your temporary difficulty should be over.

Kindly arrange to call and make this payment promptly.

Let us hear from you at once.

Result-getting collection letters approach the debtor firmly, with not the slightest appearance of doubt or hesitation. They show that your collection policy has been worked out fully and conclusively—that you know exactly the move you are going to make next, let the debtor do what he may. He on the other hand (if your credits have excluded the professional "dead beat") is in the dark, uncertain just what to expect. Your whole plan should indicate that you know your mind, that you have time-tested resources in reserve, and are master of the situation.

The first principle, therefore, is to make your policy broad and flexible. Include in it the man who will pay as soon as he gets over a temporary stringency, as well as the man who is habitually slow, or the "dead beat." Always show fairness, and anticipate requests for extensions which conditions justify; but never under any circumstances beg for payment. You are in a position to hold the reins over the debtor.

Once you have brought your policy to this breadth, you need never fail to adhere to it. Handling a dozen, 30, or 50 accounts in the course of a day, all in different stages of collection, it is difficult, however, for you always to carry out a broad and flexible policy, unless you dictate every letter carefully. This, except in special

*What tone to
take in your
letters*

*Getting a broad
collection policy*

How form paragraphs give flexibility

cases, is too expensive in the average business. A series of form letters reduces the cost and labor. But when you take up the day's list of delinquents who are due for follow-up, you gather from past records, or feel instinctively from handling the accounts, that different persons on the list should be approached from different angles. With your policy crystallized solely into form letters, you are back where you started—with a narrow policy, to which damaging exceptions must constantly be made.

Form paragraphs, because they are completely flexible, have worked out with marked success for many collection managers. Not only manufacturers, jobbers, and retailers, but trade and professional men who are selling their own services and must round up their accounts by personal calls or letters after office hours, have in a standard collection paragraph system something permanently useful. A logical plan, and thorough familiarity with the forms, are the essentials of success. Each paragraph contains one idea only, one argument, one persuasive plea or vigorous demand for immediate payment, phrased in language that fits the house policy in the best possible way. By selecting the two, three, or half dozen paragraphs which convey the exact shade of feeling you wish to convey, you can have every one of your collection letters highly personal, yet entirely in accord with the general plan.

"Saying it" in the best possible way

Letters that "write themselves"

The decisive point for example, may be reached in the second or third letter; or you can grade up gradually with half a dozen letters to the point of forcing payment in the few cases where necessary. The time which paragraphs save makes it possible for you to devote more attention to studying the past record of the debtors on your list. By noting their individual peculiarities and methods of payment, you can judge, as the follow-up file brings name after name to your attention, what kinds of letters should be written. The writing will then be instantaneous.

In handling your own collections, classify your debtors. Get clearly in mind the tone you wish to adopt. Many adjustments of collection policy are embodied in the form paragraphs. By selecting the right paragraphs, you can therefore express the exact attitude you feel you want to express toward each successive debtor.

One manager almost invariably closes his first letter to a debtor with a special sales paragraph, telling in a friendly way about goods in which the customer may be interested. These paragraphs he redictates from week to week, thus keeping them constantly up to date. Letters in which such paragraphs are included are not so much intended to make sales as to appeal for payment by means of a friendly attitude. Letters that are handled in this way often do both.

*Keeping the
paragraphs
fresh*

From time to time, the manager or chief of correspondence may profitably dictate such selling paragraphs, not only to bring sales correspondence up to date, but for the use of the order and collection and complaint correspondents. An effective argument or clever method embodied in a paragraph and classified under one of the unassigned numbers, will keep your paragraph book at the highest point of efficiency.

INDEX TO COLLECTION PARAGRAPHS

**Constant use of this
index will help you
to memorize the
paragraph numbers**

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DEBTOR GIVES REASON

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In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

COLLECTION PARAGRAPHS

OPENERS

20 Your Bill Is Overdue

Your bill for (amount) is now (length of time)
overdue.

21 We Wonder Why No Reply

Why has (have) our letter(s) of the (date or
dates) brought no reply from you?

22 Sorry You Are in Trouble

We are very sorry to hear of your (sickness,
misfortune, failure to find work, and so on).

23 Still No Answer!

We have written you (number of times) about
your bill of the (date). No reply has been
received from you.

24 Must Be Some Good Reason

There must be some good reason or we should
have had a letter.

25-29 Use these numbers for special opening collection paragraphs you may add

ACCOUNT-COLLECTING PARAGRAPHS

Use this page for additional paragraphs

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CLOSERSNote Changes In
Phrasing Here**70 Coin Card Enclosed**

Use the enclosed coin card—I have selected one into which the amount due will just fit.

71 Blank Check Enclosed

Simply sign the enclosed check and mail it to us—I have already filled it out for the right sum.

72 Pin Amount to This Letter

Simply pin this (amount in bills) to this letter and return to us in the enclosed envelop. You don't need to write a letter.

73 Call and Pay

Kindly arrange to call and make this payment promptly.

74 Expect to Hear at Once

I expect to hear from you at once.

75 Let Us Hear At Once

Let us hear from you at once.

76 Reply by (Date)

We must have your definite reply by (date).

77 Your Immediate Attention

Kindly give this matter your immediate attention.

78-79 For additional paragraphs

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

DEBTOR GIVES NO REASON

300 Notice of Payment Due

Enclosed is a memorandum of your (the) bill. Payment, as you will notice, was due on (date).

301 If You Can't Pay, Let Us Know

If payment is impossible now, the only fair thing is for you to write us or call at our office at once and take up this matter with us.

302 Courtesy of a Reply Due Us

At least the courtesy of a reply is due us. Even if you cannot pay your bill just now, you should frankly let us know the reasons why. When we know just where you stand, some settlement satisfactory to us both can be made.

303 No Reply—Are You Evading Payment?

We don't want to think you are trying to evade payment. However, that is the conclusion we shall have to come to, if you continue to leave our letters lying on your desk without a reply.

304-309 For additional paragraphs

DEBTOR GIVES REASONNote Changes in
Phrasing Here**310 Glad to Help Out**

In a situation like this we are always glad and willing to go as far as we can to help out our customers.

311 No Money—Extension Granted

In order to help you out as much as possible we are extending the date your bill is due to (date) when your temporary difficulty should be over.

312 No Money—Accept Notes

Since you are unable to pay the full amount of the bill now, we will gladly accommodate you by letting you make the settlement with your personal note or notes, bearing interest at 6%. You can arrange to give us one note for the whole amount, payable in 60 days; or two notes of equal amount, payable respectively in 30 days and 60 days; or three notes, payable respectively in 30, 60, and 90 days. Choose the plan which suits you best. This arrangement will help you over the present difficulty.

313 No Money—Will Take Back Goods

We cannot grant extension on the time of regular bills. Don't you see that this would be unfair to other customers and the same as an extra discount to you? We shall, however, be glad to have you return the goods to us, and we will cancel the bill against you.

314 No Money—Require Payment Now

Our original bill allowed you plenty of time for payment. The difficulties which you are in could have been foreseen and provided for perfectly well. We, therefore, insist upon the terms of your agreement.

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

315 Has Part Money—Extension Granted on Rest

We want to help you out as much as possible. Send us (amount) now. For the remainder, (amount), we have extended the date to (date), when your temporary difficulty should be over.

316 Has Part Money—Return Goods to Cover Balance

We cannot grant extensions on the time of regular bills. This would be unfair to other customers and would be the same as giving an extra discount to you. In order to accommodate you, however, we will accept the (amount) which you can pay now. You may ship back goods to cover the remainder (amount). We will then cancel the entire amount held against you on our books.

317-319 For additional paragraphs

ARGUMENTS FOR PAYING NOWNote Changes in
Phrasing Here**320 Prompt Payments Mean Cheaper Goods**

Prompt payment of bills by our customers makes it possible for us to sell goods more cheaply. When our money comes in regularly on the date due, we don't have to make an allowance for extra interest charges and add a percentage to all selling prices to cover the amount. You benefit by the low prices.

321 Clearing Up Ledger Accounts

We are anxious to get our ledger accounts for the month of (—) closed just as quickly as possible. Please help us out by paying today the (amount) which you owe us on account.

322 One Bill Small—Many Large

Remember that we have hundreds of small accounts like this. You will hardly miss the (amount) which you pay us today; but if you should delay, and a few others, too, it would soon mount up to a big sum for us.

323 Instalments—Easily Paid When Due

It is much easier to pay each instalment on the day it is due than to let it drag along until nearly time for the next one. We know how it is, and that is why we urge you to pay today the (amount) due on your instalment for (date).

324 You Are Not Being Fair

You want to be perfectly fair. But if you prolong the delay in sending the amount of your bill, (amount), now (length of time) overdue, you will not be treating us fairly.

325 Keep Your Credit Good

You want to keep your credit perfectly clear. The only sure way to do this, as you well know, is to pay your bills promptly as they

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

fall due. Any delay is liable to cause a bad impression, which you will find it very difficult to get rid of later on.

326-329 For additional paragraphs

IN CASE OF NON-PAYMENTNote Changes in
Phrasing Here**330 Harsh Methods a Last Resort**

We have no desire to use force in collecting this account unless it becomes necessary as a last resort.

331 Definite Action on (Date)

Unless your remittance is in our hands by (date), we shall be obliged to take definite steps for the legal collection of your overdue account.

332 You Will Lose Credit Privilege

We extend credit to our customers as a special convenience. If you abuse this privilege by not paying your bills promptly when they fall due, we shall be obliged to deny you the use of the privilege of charging your purchases in the future.

333 We Will Take Back Goods

You will remember that we retain control of goods, by the terms of our contract, until the final instalment is paid. Think of the inconvenience it would cause you now, if we were compelled to take them away. Unless, however, your instalments are paid up to date, by (date), this is the step we shall be obliged to take.

334 We Will Ask Payment of Your Guarantor

In case you do not remit by (date), we shall call on (name), who has guaranteed your account, for payment.

335 We Will Place in Hands of Lawyer

If your remittance fails to reach us by (date) we shall be obliged to turn your account over to our lawyer, who will immediately see that the necessary steps are taken to secure its payment in full.

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Use this page for additional paragraphs

CHAPTER IX

FORM LETTERS THAT SPEED UP COLLECTIONS

A St. Paul collection manager called in an expert to analyze his letter series and revise it with an eye to reducing an unduly high percentage of bad debts. On his first hasty reading, the expert red-penciled this paragraph in the second letter:

*What to watch
in writing
paragraphs*

“If you are under the impression that we are going to permit your account to drag along for six months or a year before reaching a final settlement, you are very much mistaken.”

The average sale in this concern amounted to about \$4. The company had little chance of recovering from customers who persistently refused to pay, for the amounts concerned were in the majority of cases not large enough to go to law about.

*This set of
letters proved
effective*

“In the paragraph I have marked there,” said the expert, “you are bluffing, and nine out of ten of the debtors on your books will realize the fact just as quickly as I do. It is a mean paragraph. Not only will it fail to bring in the money from bad-pays, but it will also antagonize those of your customers who fully intend to pay, but are habitually slow.”

The complete series used by this concern consisted of seven letters varying little, from first to last, in the degree of emphasis with which immediate payment was demanded. As revised by the specialist, the series had five letters, grading up gradually from a friendly note at first, which merely called the debtor's attention to the amount due, to a strong appeal to his sense of justice and fair play, followed by a final ultimatum.

The series prepared by this expert was compared with various result-getting letters used, among others, by a haberdashery, a manufacturing business, a wholesale house, a department store, and a medium-sized mail-order house. Corrected and strengthened by the com-

*Using sales
paragraphs in
collection
letters*

parison wherever necessary, the series accompanying this chapter represents the best experience of a variety of successful collection managers.

The first letter in this series definitely reminded the debtor of his obligation, but did it in so tactful a way as to cause no irritation. The final sales paragraph in the letter showed the friendly attitude of the concern, and at the same time indicated that the debtor's trade was appreciated and further desired.

Slightly firmer, the second letter still preserved the attitude that the firm was confident that the debtor intended to pay without being forced, but had merely neglected to do so. To shorten the series and bring the collection rapidly to a crisis, this letter sometimes was used first. Nothing in it indicates that it is a follow-up.

The third letter comes up sharply. The writer here expressed surprise at the debtor's failure to pay promptly, and appealed to his sense of fair play.

Such letters, fair, square, and straightforward, usually brought the honest debtor's check or a letter of explanation. When they failed to draw either, the writer brought the matter definitely to a crisis in the fourth letter of the series. The delinquent was given his choice of either paying up or of standing suit. A definite date was set for his reply.

The fifth letter sometimes took the place of the fourth in the follow-up; again it followed as the final demand for payment. It is a definite ultimatum and makes its point without any attempt at argument.

This kind of flexibility which permits you to omit one or two letters from the series if necessary, is an important factor in the collection plan. The element of risk in a form letter series is that it may be allowed to harden into a system followed in all instances and without variation. All the weapons of collection—personal call, wire, individual letter, form paragraph and form letter—have their special fields of use. Even the times of follow-up need to be kept as flexible and personal as possible. Close collection depends on reaching each debtor with the proper approach. With the routine made standard, it is possible to classify your debtors, and in special instances to drop out a form letter or focus on the delinquent with a more personal message. The present series was planned with this point in mind. In

*Putting
“punch” into
form letters*

*How to keep a
series flexible*

it the third letter can follow the first, if necessary, and the fifth the third, or a beginning can be made with the second. The series was made long enough to cover tactfully a delicate case; but the letters were arranged in such a way that the manager could handle the slow-pays sharply and decisively.

How to use the unusual letter

Sometimes a single unusual letter will catch the favorable attention of debtors and bring difficult accounts into line. Successful collection letters from varied lines show the collection manager definitely what phrases and appeals bring in the money due. Such are the specimens numbered I—VIII.

Often a successful letter is a growth or an inspiration and has an interesting story behind it. A southern lumber company facing a business reorganization found on its books a large number of small past-due accounts. The debtors were on the average reliable, but the company had never insisted on a prompt collection policy.

How this letter grew

In an effort to clear up the numerous small debts which had accumulated, the collection manager studied successful collection letters and policies, and finally worked out a letter (VIII—8) which he sent to all dealers owing \$10 or less, who had failed to respond to regular statements. This letter evidently attracted the attention of debtors, for it brought immediate and most gratifying returns from a large percentage of them. Clothed in novel form to distinguish it from the mass of the day's mail, a fair appeal of this type is likely to prove effective in bringing the money even from difficult debtors. Some customers have to be startled out of their lethargy; others you must hurry into paying by working on their fear of what steps you may take. The actual letters following the standard forms show many methods of attacking accounts, and the analysis by paragraphs enables the collection manager to pick out the best paragraphs touching any point. The art of collecting is to study out your list of delinquents month by month, and fit your letter series to the needs of the individual.

Fitting your letters to your needs

INDEX TO COLLECTION LETTERS

Constant use of this
index will help you
to memorize the
paragraph numbers

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GETTING IN THE MONEY

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Constant use of this index will help you to memorize the paragraph numbers

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In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

FIVE STANDARD COLLECTION LETTERS

A FORM SERIES READY FOR USE

1300 First Letter. Did You Receive Our Statement?

- a Will you kindly let me know whether you received our itemized statement of your account which we mailed you on the (date)? If it failed to reach you, the amount of the bill, due on the (date), was (amount).
- b In paying, you may simply pin your check to this letter and mail it back to me in the enclosed envelop. You need not bother to write a letter.
- c Our new fall stocks are now in, and it is well worth a special trip to see them. Some are exactly what you will be needing soon. And you, I know, are one who appreciates the artistic possibilities of early shopping, while complete stocks offer a greater variety of selection.

1301 Second Letter. Your Check Has Not Arrived

- a The check you were to send me for (amount) due on your bill of the (date) has not arrived. No doubt you overlooked the bill, or have it pigeonholed for early settlement.
- b The amount is not large. But you know we carry hundreds of accounts just about this size. Prompt settlements only are business-like.
- c I am enclosing an addressed envelop which you may use.
- d Don't bother to write a letter. Just pin your check to this note and drop it in the letter box.

1302 Third Letter. Account Still Hanging Over

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

- a Your account of (amount), due us on the (date), is still hanging over.
- b Although I have written as well as sent the statement, you have not remitted the money or given me any reason for not doing so.
- c You would not intentionally be otherwise than absolutely fair in your business relations, I am quite sure. Yet when you fail to pay your account as it falls due, you are not being fair either to yourself or to us.
- d I expect to hear from you at once.

1303 Fourth Letter. Warning of Legal Action

- a I have sent you frequent statements and letters about the (amount) on your account, which is now past due (number of days or weeks).
- b You have not paid the account, or even answered my letters. Your credit—your reputation for honesty and fairness in your business dealings—is at stake. Continued unexplained delay means a serious disregard for your own good.
- c Harsh collection methods are a last resort with us. Our president says, "Give every customer the benefit of the doubt for a definite and reasonable period before taking action." Your account has been allowed to run to the time limit, however, and you have failed to respond.
- d I am still going to give you a sufficient number of days to settle the account before I put it in the hands of a lawyer.
- e Let me have your definite reply without fail by (date).

1304 Fifth Letter. Last Chance to Settle

- a This firm cannot allow any further delay in the payment of your account of (amount).

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

- b You have been given every extension, but have failed to respond.
- c This bill is now overdue (number of days, weeks or months).
- d Your account will now go to our lawyer, who will promptly take the legal steps to secure collection unless I hear from you by the (date).

1305-1309 For additional collection form letters

GETTING IN THE MONEY

Use this page for additional paragraphs

Use this page for additional paragraphs

TESTED COLLECTION LETTERS IN SERIES

SERIES I—WHOLESALER TO DEALER

First Letter. Account Overdue

Enclosed find for your attention a memorandum of your overdue account, an early settlement of which will be greatly appreciated.

In this margin
the chief corre-
spondent should
note next to
each paragraph
any additions, or
changes in phras-
ing he may care
to make

Second Letter. Why the Delay?

- a We are still waiting returns on your past-due indebtedness.
- b Why the delay in payment?

Third Letter. Management Orders Collection

- a The management has intimated that sufficient time has been allowed for the payment of your account and has directed collection forthwith.
- b Please favor us with your attention

Fourth Letter. Final Chance to Avoid Trouble

- a We are making our last direct demand for settlement of your overdue account, previous to closing our records and referring the collection elsewhere.
- b It is to be hoped you will understand the urgency in the matter and govern yourself accordingly.

SERIES II—RETAILER TO CUSTOMER

First Letter. Aims to Remove Any Complaint

- a This department has just received for collection a delinquent account against you, covering a purchase you made from us some time ago. We believe you have failed to make payment for one

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

of two reasons. Either you have some complaint which you think has not been given prompt attention, or else you have merely overlooked the debt on account of absence from home or pressure of other duties.

- b If you have made a complaint, will you state your grievance to us once more? Our accounting department may have overlooked it in the large volume of business which is done there, but WE will NOT overlook it, for it is our business to settle all just complaints to the entire satisfaction of our customers. Now is the time to clean up all misunderstandings.
- c If the account has merely escaped your attention, we ask you to accord us the same fair treatment we offer by sending a remittance to close the account.
- d We assure you of our earnest wish to maintain the pleasant relations that have existed between us.

Second Letter. Let Us Have an Explanation or Schedule

- a We wish to call attention again to your account. You are allowing your payments to run behind.
- b When we entered into a contract with you we expected the strictest fulfilment on your part. The margin of profit which we have allowed ourselves demands that the obligation be discharged as agreed and with the least possible friction.
- c We believe this account has escaped your attention and that a reminder will result in settlement. If any cause for dissatisfaction with the contract exists, please inform us at once. It is better to clear up misunderstandings at the outset than to allow them to drag, making your account troublesome to us and annoying to you.
- d If it is not convenient for you to make a payment at present, then let us have a definite remittance schedule from you.

GETTING IN THE MONEY

Third Letter. When Debtor Places Another Order

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

- a When you ordered the merchandise you received from us, you gave your occupation as factory superintendent. This position should carry considerable personal responsibility. Yet, as we wrote you in our recent letter, the account you now have with our company has not been settled according to the contract.
- b If you will explain to our satisfaction your continued delay in remitting for your first order, we shall be glad to fill your present order. We are writing to you frankly. In your position you can appreciate the fact that we are giving you another opportunity to make payment rather than asking an attorney to look you up.

SERIES III—PROFESSIONAL COLLECTOR TO DEBTOR

First Letter. Remit or Explain

- a We have today received a claim against you for immediate collection. It was given to us by John Webster of New York. The amount is \$20. As we wish to afford you an opportunity of an amicable settlement, we ask you to take up with us by return mail your reason for neglecting this obligation. We hope it is simply an oversight on your part and that prompt attention will save you the embarrassment of having the account taken into court.
- b It is expected that this notice will bring an immediate response in the form of a remittance or some definite statement as to when a settlement will be made.
- c We expect to hear from you within the next FIVE days.

Second Letter. Touches Self-Interest, Also Fair Play

- a We can hardly believe that you will allow us to use extreme measures in order to collect the claim of John Webster of New York, amounting to \$20.

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

- b If the debt is an honest one, we believe you will make every effort to pay it. If it is not a just claim, you do not want to pay it, and we would not expect you to.
- c Honesty is the best policy. Can you afford to risk your good reputation for the sake of such a small sum?
- d We desire to effect a settlement of this account in an easy and amicable way. Giving publicity to it would not help us any, but it certainly would be a discredit to you among your friends and neighbors.
- e Let us be fair with each other. Send us your check or a money order TODAY. If you cannot send it today, be very sure to send us immediate word as to just what day we may look for it.

SERIES IV—RETAILER TO CONSUMER

First Letter. Account 90 Days Old

- a Your account with us now amounts to \$78.34. Because nothing has been paid on it for three months, we ask that you either let us know what circumstances are causing the delay or else make regular payments from now on.
- b This is necessary because on opening the account we agreed upon monthly payments, as is our custom, and all our finances are arranged accordingly.

Second Letter. Account 120 Days Old

- a On July 1, we wrote you about your account with us, showing that you had a balance due us of \$78.34, upon which nothing had been paid for four months.
- b As we arrange for monthly payments on our charge accounts, as we agreed with you, our finances are shaped to depend on payments every 30 days. Therefore we ask a settlement of this account.

GETTING IN THE MONEY

Third Letter. Account 130 Days Old

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

- a We wrote you on July 1 and August 1 about your account with us, which you agreed to pay monthly, but which is now more than four months overdue. We have not heard from you.
- b Therefore the account must be settled within the next few days, or we will have our collector take it up.

SERIES V—RETAILER TO CONSUMER

First Letter. Clearing Away the Debtor's Objections

- a We desire at this time to call your attention to the statement of your account mailed you August 1, amounting to \$63.92. We ask you to see that a remittance covering this amount reaches us without further delay.
- b You will remember that when you reopened your account in April it was on the understanding that it would be taken care of on a strictly 30-day basis, as all our accounts are handled. Your April and May accounts were paid on June 19, but the above statement covers purchases made since June 1.
- c If we could afford to carry our accounts for four or five months, we would be glad to do so and particularly for you, Mrs. Harris, as we appreciate your patronage very much, but owing to the large volume of credit business we carry, it is impossible for us to handle our business in this manner and we must therefore adhere strictly to the 30-day basis.
- d We feel that with you it is only a matter of oversight. Will you not give this account your prompt attention and see that your future accounts are taken care of in the manner which we suggest?

Second Letter. Payment Urgent and Easy

As soon as you finish reading this letter, please take your pen and make out a check for

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

\$63.92 payable to the Wilton-Redman Company, and mail it in the enclosed envelop. We are sending this letter to you by special delivery, so as to insure it receiving prompt attention. We expect your answer to reach our office before we close Monday afternoon, August 15, otherwise we will suspend credit on your account, which we dislike to do.

SERIES VI—MANUFACTURER TO DEALER

First Letter. Backing a Draft with a Simultaneous Request for Payment

Will you kindly honor our draft of May 12, for \$94, which is at the Second National Bank, or remit the amount to us direct without further delay?

Second Letter. Explanations Are in Order

Let me know by return mail the cause of the delay in receiving returns from our draft on you, under date of May 12.

Third Letter. Account Watched and Forced Collection Pending

Again your account has come under inspection through our follow-up system. On May 31 we wrote you a second letter of inquiry regarding the draft of May 12, but we have heard nothing from you. We cannot grant any further time on your long-past-due account. A remittance sent to us by return mail will prevent us from turning to our legal department for collection. We dislike to do this. We do not know what your intentions are with reference to the account, but we do know that we will not let you evade payment.

SERIES VII—WHOLESALER TO DEALER

First Letter. Asks Payment before Filling of New Order

- a We have today received your order through our salesman, Mr. Peck, for which accept our thanks.

GETTING IN THE MONEY

- b We find, however, that you are owing us for invoice of April 6, \$142, and April 29, \$95, a total of \$237. Since these invoices are past due, we must request a remittance of \$237 before filling your order.
- c If you will send us this amount, we shall be glad to ship your order.

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

Second Letter. Why No Answer? Pay at Once

- a You have not answered our letter of May 15 about your past-due account and also the order you gave Mr. Peck on May 13. Why not?
- b If you will put yourself in our position, you will see that it is only fair that shipment of your order should wait until your account has been paid up to date.
- c When the account was opened, it was with the understanding that bills were to be paid promptly. Therefore, we expect a payment of the amount now due. On receipt of a remittance of \$237, the goods on your recent order will be shipped promptly.
- d Please give this account your immediate attention.

SERIES VIII—SINGLE COLLECTION LETTERS

(1) Subscription House to Customer

- a You purchased from us a short time ago a reference library on the \$5 a month plan, and you have paid us \$20 on account, leaving a balance of \$140. If you send us your check in full at once, you will have a right to a cash discount of \$10, so that the check will be for \$130 only. It may not be convenient for you to remit this amount in one sum, but if you still wish to save the discount you can do so by dividing the amount into seven equal parts and sending us seven checks of \$18.57 each, the first dated at once, the second a month later, the third a month later still, and so

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

- on, until you have a total of seven checks amounting to \$130, but payable during seven consecutive months. This will enable you to buy at the lowest cash price and yet spread your payments over a large part of a year without any inconvenience.
- b We make you this offer because we have at the present time on our books several thousand accounts similar to yours, and the number is increasing several hundred a day. This means unusually heavy clerical work in our accounting department. It is impossible for us to handle many more of these accounts. Accordingly, to make room for the business that is now coming in, we are sending this offer to a limited number of our present customers.
 - c If this offer does not interest you, do not take the trouble to reply, but continue to make your payments as heretofore. If it does interest you, make out the checks to our order, dated as stated above, and send them all to us at once, in full and final settlement of your account. Remember, the checks you send will not reach your bank to be drawn against your account until the date you write on them, so that all you will have to do each month is to see that your balance is then large enough for that month's check.
 - d If in any month you should find it impossible to pay one of the checks sent us, we shall be glad to arrange for any reasonable postponement, provided only you give us 10 days' notice. If it is more convenient for you to date your checks on some day of the month other than that on which you receive this, you may do so.

(2) Mail-Order Concern to Customer

- a What do you do when a man owes you a small sum of money—\$2 for instance—and doesn't pay any attention to repeated letters and bills?

GETTING IN THE MONEY

- b Do you charge it off to profit and loss, or do you spend another \$2 sending him more letters and bills?
- c The reason I am asking you is that you sent us an order and forgot all about paying for it.
- d Yes, I know you're "good for it," but I would feel more sure if you were to pin a \$2 bill to this letter and send it back by return mail.

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

(3) Retailer to Customer

- a Some time ago I wrote to you about your account and thus far you have not noticed my letter. I also wrote to you on March 25, referring to my own obligations and asking you for assistance. This letter you have likewise ignored.
- b I must impress upon your mind that your account has now been hanging over for nearly a year, and that you agreed to pay by the week until the account was settled. Now, Mr. Wilson, it is not my intention to make threats of any sort, but you must look at this in a business-like way and see whether I am in the right.
- c In the first place, I have lost your trade. You have not been in the store to buy as much as a pair of hose since I accommodated you, consequently my accommodation not only drove you away from the store, but also left me "out" \$15.70 in an unpaid bill.
- d Mr. Wilson, I am willing to help you. If you will call next Saturday night, and make a payment then and every week thereafter, before you realize it the account will be entirely cleaned up. Better still, come in and let us talk this over and see what arrangements we can make for settlement. I do not want you to feel that you have to cross the street whenever you see me coming.
- e I want your business and I will do anything fair to be agreeable. Just now our lines are complete and include the best clothing, fur-

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes In
Phrasing Here

nishings, and shoes in the vicinity. Let me hear from you by a personal call. I know you will be glad to look over our stock.

(4) **Retailer to Customer**

- a We note that your account for February-April, \$146.80, is still unpaid, and would draw your attention to our terms:
- b "Our goods are sold at cash prices, and payment is required early in the following month."
- c We ask, therefore, that you favor us with payment in accordance with these terms.

(5) **Manufacturer to Customer**

- a Your order was sent to us some months before our new stock was received from the factory. Because we were unable to fill it promptly we have not wished to ask for an early payment of our bill of March 5.
- b Our financial year closes, however, on June 30, and I hope that all accounts may be settled before then. May I ask you to help out by sending a check for the amount of the enclosed bill at your early convenience?

(6) **Manufacturer to Dealer**

- a According to our bookkeeper's report the past-due bills in your account amount to \$296.40 and, as the invoices of May 1 are still unpaid, we are at a loss to understand why our several urgent letters asking for a settlement have been ignored. If you realize that you have not yet paid for goods sold to you on 60-day terms more than four months ago, we think you will concede our treatment of your account has been exceedingly considerate and that we are entitled to be paid without further delay, expense, or annoyance. We ask you to send promptly on receipt of this letter a remittance of \$296.40. Why not recognize at once the fact that this account must be paid? What can you expect to gain by your silence?

GETTING IN THE MONEY

Note Changes in
Phrasing Here

- b If you do not answer, we shall be forced to the conclusion that more effective measures must be adopted to gain this long-overdue settlement and, accordingly, on June 9, your remittance not having been received, we will draw upon you through a bank in Boston. We will place the claim in the hands of our local attorney for prompt action, if the draft is not paid on presentation.
- c We are reluctant to adopt such severe measures or even to mention them, but we cannot grant a further extension. After the accommodation you have had from us, will you put us to the annoyance and expense of collecting from you in this manner, and are you willing to stand for the annoyance and expense a suit will cost you?

(7) Retailer to Customer

- a You will recall that you have failed to settle for your note, which is now a month overdue. We want to give you another chance to remit your payment in a pleasant, honest, and businesslike manner.
- b To be perfectly frank with you, your note is for value received, and we cannot let you evade paying it. The time has now come when we must have an understanding. There are only two ways this can be settled; one is that you remit at once, and the other is--well, it is called "forced collection." You know what that means. It means that we will hand your note to an attorney with instructions to sue you, if necessary. What will your neighbors think? It certainly will not help your credit with them.
- c Now, Mr. Martin, you make it necessary for us to write you in this way by your failure to answer any of our letters. We don't like to do this if we can help it.
- d Your note with interest now amounts to \$94.80. Why not forward this amount by first mail, and avoid further annoyance and expense?

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Note Changes in (8) Supply Company to Customer
Phrasing Here

"Many hands make light work."
Think of one man
Having to pay
\$5,000 cash.
Looks hard—doesn't it?
Then think of .
500 men paying the same amount—
\$10 each—looks easy.
We have to raise
\$5,000 this week.
Need help—
Won't you please
Look up our statement, June 1,
Amount due \$8.72,
And "lend a helping hand"?
Thank you.

CHAPTER X

GETTING THE MAIL OUT ON TIME

When his business grew out of the purely one-man stage, a successful manufacturer of advertising specialties found it more and more of a task to supervise personally all his correspondence. Three and four hours of his business day, he discovered, were being consumed by reading the mail, dictating replies and often doing a share of the mechanical work of opening, distributing or sending out letters. This time, it is quite clear, he should have devoted to creative work.

Analyzing the situation, he found that, without giving up that insight into the details of his business which daily, intimate contact with the mail afforded him, he could shift to his stenographer most of the responsibility for the replies and could standardize the mechanical handling of his correspondence.

After the change, she opened the mail and made a preliminary reading of it. Some of the letters she was able to answer without referring to anyone; the majority she passed on to the executive heads of the different departments for information or reply. In the final analysis, only a very few letters were found to require the personal attention of the executive.

Moreover, a simple report was marked out, which now tells him every day the number of each kind of letter received and sent—orders, complaints, inquiries, and miscellaneous. Any letter of interest so listed he can call in for reference. Occasionally he devotes part of a Monday to reading all the letters, outgoing as well as incoming, simply to keep in touch; but he finds that a capable secretary is able to take care of the routine work day in and day out quite effectively. The care is shifted and the cost lessened.

This manufacturer challenged and solved two correspondence leaks—the waste of his own time in reading

*How to shift
the burden of
dictation*

*Keeping in
touch with the
correspondence*

Standardizing correspondence routine

mail and in routine dictation. Not 5% of the letters which formerly consumed his attention, had actually brought up new or important problems. For 95 letters out of every 100—and the fact, if not the exact percentage, may be taken as almost universal—the formula of reply had long been established.

Many offices have reduced the various steps from opening the mail to sealing and stamping replies. Such improved methods of work in the correspondence department group themselves under three headings: (1) improvements in handling the incoming and outgoing mail mechanically; (2) plans to standardize ideas in order to simplify the actual writing of the letters; (3) standards of personal ability which enable the office manager to suit his force to its capacities and the work to be done.

Cutting the cost of your correspondence is, therefore, simply applying these short cuts—giving over to an expertly constructed routine everything in the field of your office correspondence except the actual writing of those few letters which require decisions, research, and actions that are new.

Machines that save time

For the actual opening of the envelopes, machines of various types have been perfected which do the work more speedily and with less damage to the contents than the old-fashioned paper knife. If your office is small an inexpensive hand machine will suffice; but if the number of letters received in a day runs from 1,000 up, you will be better served by one of the numerous motor-driven devices which are on the market. These operate in different ways. On one, for example, the cutting tool is a horizontal disk, with teeth set on its upper edge, which makes considerably more than 1,000 revolutions a minute. Another consists of a sand belt running at a high rate of speed over two drums. The operator can thus in a few seconds rub open the envelope folds of as many letters as he can hold in his hand.

Don't let enclosures be lost

By having every envelope opened on two sides, you can make sure that all enclosures will be removed. A great danger in any method of opening mail is injury to the contents. If the clerk is careless, it is easy to slit a check or bill, or halve an important order so that one or two items become illegible. The easiest way to avoid this is to hold a bunch of envelopes in your hand and jog them on a table top. The contents fall to the bottom,

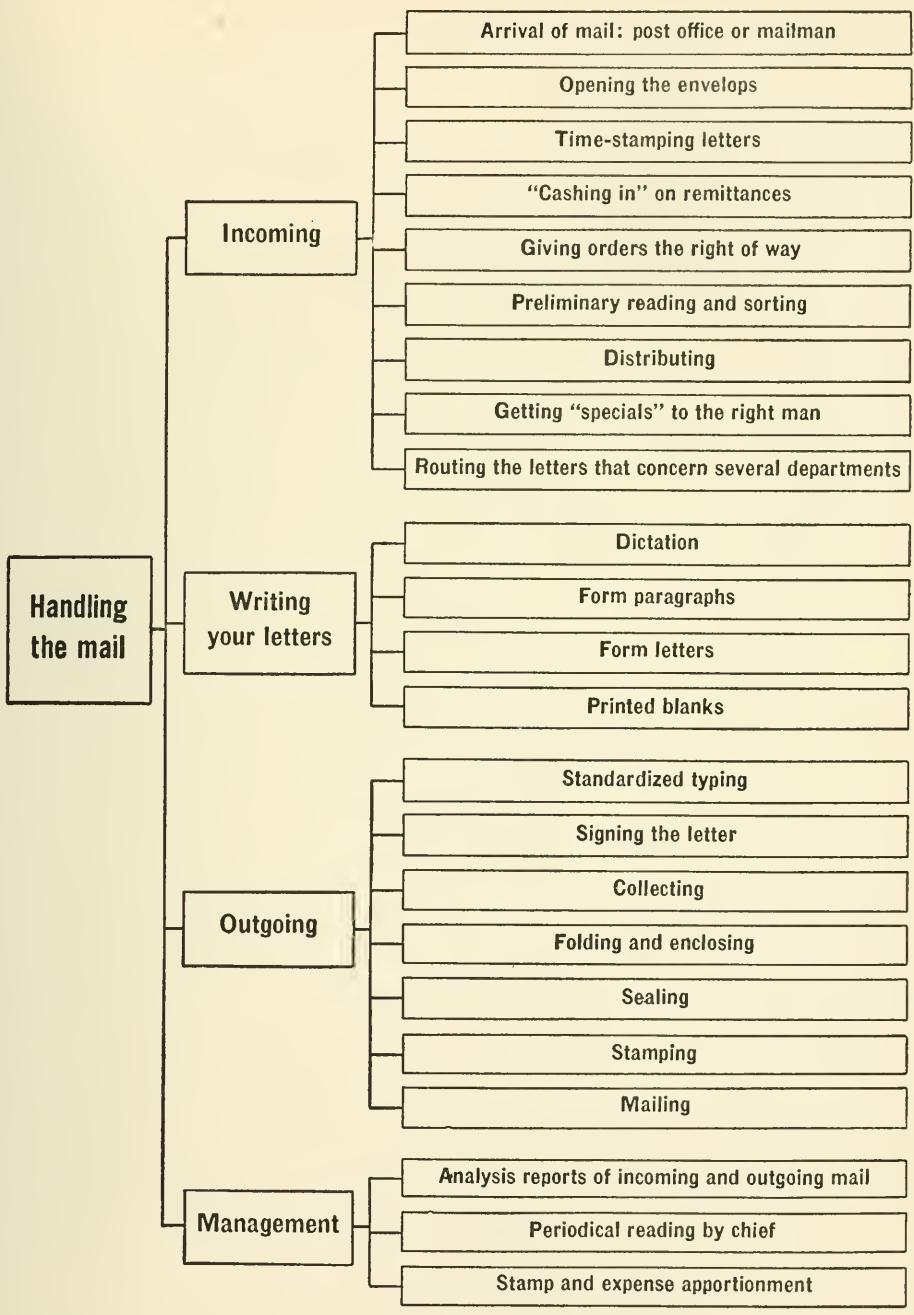


FIGURE 16: One way to cut the cost of correspondence is to lay out an effective routine for handling the mail, like that described in this chapter, for example. On this simple

chart you can easily follow the course a letter takes from the time it is received until the reply is mailed. There's no reason for mistakes in routine when it's all mapped out like this.

**The Number of Operations an Hour if
One Operation is Performed in the Time Shown.**

Time	One Hour														
.01	6000	.51	117	1.01	59.5	1.51	39.7	2.01	29.8	2.51	23.9	3.01	19.9		
.02	3000	.52	115	1.02	58.9	1.52	39.4	2.02	29.7	2.52	23.8	3.02	19.8		
.03	2000	.53	113	1.03	58.3	1.53	39.0	2.03	29.5	2.53	23.7	3.03	19.8		
.04	1500	.54	111	1.04	57.7	1.54	38.9	2.04	29.4	2.54	23.6	3.04	19.7		
.05	1200	.55	109	1.05	57.2	1.55	38.7	2.05	29.2	2.55	23.5	3.05	19.6		
.06	1000	.56	107	1.06	56.7	1.56	38.4	2.06	29.1	2.56	23.4	3.06	19.6		
.07	857	.57	105	1.07	56.1	1.57	38.2	2.07	28.9	2.57	23.3	3.07	19.5		
.08	750	.58	103	1.08	55.7	1.58	37.9	2.08	28.8	2.58	23.2	3.08	19.4		
.09	676	.59	101	1.09	55.1	1.59	37.7	2.09	28.7	2.59	23.1	3.09	19.4		
.10	600	.60	100	1.10	54.6	1.60	37.5	2.10	28.5	2.60	23.0	3.10	19.3		
.11	545	.61	98.4	1.11	54.1	1.61	37.2	2.11	28.4	2.61	22.9	3.11	19.2		
.12	500	.62	96.7	1.12	53.6	1.62	37.0	2.12	28.3	2.62	22.9	3.12	19.2		
.13	462	.63	95.3	1.13	53.1	1.63	36.8	2.13	28.1	2.63	22.8	3.13	19.1		
.14	428	.64	93.7	1.14	52.6	1.64	36.5	2.14	28.0	2.64	22.7	3.14	19.1		
.15	400	.65	92.3	1.15	52.2	1.65	36.3	2.15	27.9	2.65	22.6	3.15	19.0		
.16	375	.66	90.9	1.16	51.7	1.66	36.1	2.16	27.7	2.66	22.5	3.16	18.9		
.17	353	.67	89.7	1.17	51.3	1.67	35.9	2.17	27.6	2.67	22.4	3.17	18.9		
.18	333	.68	88.2	1.18	50.7	1.68	35.7	2.18	27.5	2.68	22.3	3.18	18.8		
.19	316	.69	87.0	1.19	50.3	1.69	35.5	2.19	27.3	2.69	22.3	3.19	18.8		
.20	300	.70	85.7	1.20	50.0	1.70	35.3	2.20	27.2	2.70	22.2	3.20	18.7		
.21	286	.71	84.1	1.21	49.6	1.71	35.2	2.21	27.1	2.71	22.1	3.21	18.6		
.22	273	.72	83.3	1.22	49.2	1.72	35.0	2.22	27.0	2.72	22.0	3.22	18.6		
.23	261	.73	82.3	1.23	48.7	1.73	34.8	2.23	26.9	2.73	21.9	3.23	18.5		
.24	250	.74	81.8	1.24	48.4	1.74	34.6	2.24	26.7	2.74	21.8	3.24	18.5		
.25	240	.75	80.0	1.25	48.0	1.75	34.4	2.25	26.6	2.75	21.8	3.25	18.4		
.26	230	.76	78.9	1.26	47.6	1.76	34.0	2.26	26.5	2.76	21.7	3.26	18.4		
.27	222	.77	77.7	1.27	47.2	1.77	33.8	2.27	26.4	2.77	21.6	3.27	18.3		
.28	214	.78	76.9	1.28	46.8	1.78	33.7	2.28	26.3	2.78	21.5	3.28	18.2		
.29	207	.79	76.0	1.29	46.5	1.79	33.5	2.29	26.2	2.79	21.5	3.29	18.2		
.30	200	.80	75.0	1.30	46.2	1.80	33.3	2.30	26.0	2.80	21.4	3.30	18.1		
.31	193	.81	74.2	1.31	45.8	1.81	33.1	2.31	25.9	2.81	21.3	3.31	18.1		
.32	187	.82	73.1	1.32	45.4	1.82	32.9	2.32	25.8	2.82	21.2	3.32	18.0		
.33	182	.83	72.3	1.33	45.1	1.83	32.7	2.33	25.7	2.83	21.2	3.33	18.0		
.34	176	.84	71.4	1.34	44.7	1.84	32.0	2.34	25.6	2.84	21.1	3.34	17.9		
.35	171	.85	70.7	1.35	44.4	1.85	32.4	2.35	25.5	2.85	21.0	3.35	17.9		
.36	167	.86	69.7	1.36	44.1	1.86	32.2	2.36	25.4	2.86	20.9	3.36	17.8		
.37	162	.87	69.0	1.37	43.7	1.87	32.2	2.37	25.3	2.87	20.9	3.37	17.8		
.38	163	.88	68.1	1.38	43.5	1.88	32.0	2.38	25.2	2.88	20.8	3.38	17.7		
.39	154	.89	67.3	1.39	43.1	1.89	31.7	2.39	25.1	2.89	20.7	3.39	17.6		
.40	150	.90	66.6	1.40	42.8	1.90	31.5	2.40	25.0	2.90	20.6	3.40	17.6		
.41	146	.91	66.0	1.41	42.6	1.91	31.4	2.41	24.8	2.91	20.6	3.41	17.5		
.42	143	.92	65.2	1.42	42.5	1.92	31.2	2.42	24.7	2.92	20.5	3.42	17.5		
.43	139	.93	64.6	1.43	41.9	1.93	31.0	2.43	24.6	2.93	20.4	3.43	17.4		
.44	136	.94	63.8	1.44	41.6	1.94	30.9	2.44	24.5	2.94	20.4	3.44	17.4		
.45	133	.95	63.2	1.45	41.4	1.95	30.7	2.45	24.4	2.95	20.3	3.45	17.3		
.46	130	.96	62.5	1.46	41.1	1.96	30.6	2.46	24.3	2.96	20.2	3.46	17.3		
.47	128	.97	62.0	1.47	40.8	1.97	30.4	2.47	24.2	2.97	20.2	3.47	17.2		
.48	125	.98	61.2	1.48	40.6	1.98	30.3	2.48	24.1	2.98	20.1	3.48	17.2		
.49	122	.99	60.7	1.49	40.3	1.99	30.1	2.49	24.0	2.99	20.0	3.49	17.1		
.50	120	1.00	60.0	1.50	40.0	2.00	30.0	2.50	24.0	3.00	20.0	3.50	17.1		

FIGURE 17: You can easily see from this table just what savings are possible by standardizing the routine of handling correspondence. A basis for comparing the effectiveness

of the various workers is also provided, so that the work may be evenly distributed according to each one's capacity, which helps, of course, to keep down the number of inequalities.

and plenty of space remains at the other edge of the envelop to be cut. The envelops are then "evened" lightly on the other edge before applying them edgewise against the sand belt.

Once the envelops are opened, the careful sorting and routing of the letters so that they reach the proper departments and persons promptly, saves much time and useless labor in the office. In one mail-order house, where the mail wagon brings in every day an average of 6,000 letters, the sorting desks are placed adjoining the opening machine. The two clerks who sort the mail sit in front of a pigeonholed rack which is similar to a post office "galley," or smaller.

Each compartment in this sorting rack is labeled with the name of a department or person. The clerks quickly scan through the letters, time-stamp them, and toss them into the proper compartments. When it is impossible to decide by the contents of a letter where it should go, it is tossed into a special compartment for later investigation.

Salesmen in this concern, and practically all regular customers, use distinctive red-edged envelops in sending orders and remittances. These envelops are picked out as soon as the mail is received, and are opened and sorted ahead of others. Thus all orders are started on their way at the earliest possible minute. Remittances are carried in a locked valise to the cashier's department. Miscellaneous communications are left to the last, to be sorted after the mass of mail has been distributed to the proper departments.

One hardware concern avoids delay by having its own wagon at the post office every morning at 6:30. Clerks are at work in the mail-opening department by 7; and by 8 o'clock, when the rest of the office employees arrive, most of the letters are ready for distribution.

Corresponding with the compartments in the clerk's rack are the divisions in the office "mail bag," a device used to distribute the mail. Office boys have regular routes which they cover completely every 25 minutes. Each desk on these routes has two containers for papers. Into the right box go incoming letters as well as interhouse communications and miscellaneous messages; in the left box all outgoing items, including signed letters, are placed.

*Perhaps you
can use this
plan*

*This speeds up
the mail*

*Here is another
adaptable plan*

*A device that
saves time*

At each desk the boys distribute incoming communications, and take away outgoing messages. The boy assorts and places in the correct compartments of his bag these outgoing items, which are already marked for the proper department or place where they are to be taken. He then distributes them to the proper desks on his route. He calls last at the mailing room where he leaves the signed letters he has collected.

*How to route
letters through
the office*

In the place of this "mail bag" device, a shoe manufacturer uses a rubber-tired wagon, which has compartments arranged in order for the various desks where mail and messages are to be delivered and collected. Regular routes are followed. There are four floors in the factory office, and the route on each floor is planned so that it will end at the elevator door. This schedule saves time, avoids confusion, and helps to assure the prompt delivery of every piece of mail. The wagon is able to carry much more than the mail boy can with his bag, and with the larger compartments there is less danger of papers getting mixed and sent to the wrong people, causing delay and clogging the whole mechanics of mail-handling.

*Getting the
letter to the
right man*

If you receive a number of letters which have to be handled by two, three, or four people, you must make sure that each correspondent concerned will get such letters without too much delay. In a western mail-order house which sells chiefly to farmers and small-town customers, the orders often call for several articles, often from widely separated departments—a pump, a barrel of sugar, a suit of clothes, for instance. A complaint, an inquiry, and an order were all discussed in the letter of one customer.

To make sure that no department is delayed in its work by letters being held up in other departments, regular schedules have been adopted in this concern. The time allowed each correspondent for handling his letters is four hours; at the end of that time he must have finished the letters, or be able to give a good reason for not having done so.

The girls who read and sort the mail are thoroughly familiar with all departments. Besides, they have a list showing the name and place on the schedule of every department and person who regularly handle correspondence. When a letter has to go to more than one person, a schedule slip is attached stamped with the names

of the proper persons in the order in which they are to receive the letter; the time to be taken by each in handling it is also marked. At the end of the allotted four hours, the mail boy collects these letters and distributes them again to the persons next in order.

Reducing errors to 1%

The sorting clerks learn to scan through letters very quickly and note in a moment which departments should receive them. Out of the average daily mail, less than 1% are returned because of faulty scheduling.

Even more precise is the system in a furniture factory. Here, the opening department starts work promptly at 8 o'clock. Orders are given a clear track, ahead of every other kind of mail, and the schedule on which they are handled is as follows:

8:00—Mail opened.

8:15—Placed on credit man's desk.

8:45—O. K.'d orders sent to chief routing clerk.

9:15—Handed to entry clerk in shipping department.

Subsequent deliveries pass through the departments with equal speed. Such a system serves to minimize delays and save confusion by fixing a definite method of handling the routine.

Some points in addressing letters

People who write to business houses, even men who are in business for themselves, often fail to realize that their letters are units among many, and that if these happen to fall outside of the regular routine of mail, they need a subaddress to the specific department or individual concerned. A minor official in a box factory, for example, wrote to a supply house for important information in connection with a customer's order. The reply was addressed simply to the concern, and there was nothing in the letter to indicate its importance or the man to whom it was to go.

No central correspondence file was kept in this office. Each executive's letters were filed in a personal cabinet, and each department filed separately. The sorting clerk searched through all the department files, trying to trace the owner of this letter. Finding no carbon of the letter that had been written to the supply house, she returned the letter, with a note to the effect that the files had been thoroughly searched and the owner of the letter could not be located. She concluded by saying that the information must have been sent to them by mistake.

How to prevent letters from being lost

*Why letters
should be
addressed to
individuals*

Meantime, the executive to whom the letter really belonged had impatiently awaited its coming. He wrote a second time and telegraphed, before he finally secured the information he needed.

In the endeavor to prevent rebating and similar evils, many concerns formerly insisted upon mail being addressed to the house. Now, however, the trend is in the other direction; all individuals with whom they have correspondence are requested to refer their replies to the specific department or person. One concern has the request made prominently in red type at the foot of the page. This policy, together with a carefully planned filing system, centrally located, will usually enable a clerk to fix on the person for whom any letter is intended.

*A file that helps
write letters*

Such a filing system is now in use by a manufacturer of office appliances. His sorting clerks have a special three-drawer filing cabinet within easy reach of the sorting table. In all departments where correspondence is not purely routine, a third carbon is made of every letter and sent to the mail-sorting department to be filed in this cabinet. The number of letters handled in this way is not great, and the task of filing the extra carbons is easily performed. Whenever an incoming letter carries no indication of the person for whom it is intended, the clerk refers to the carbons in the filing cabinet. The initials on the carbon, when it is located, immediately show who is to receive the letter.

Each drawer of the cabinet contains carbons for one month, filed geographically. Thus, when the top drawer is being used to file letters for March, the middle drawer contains January carbons and in the bottom drawer are put the February carbons.

As soon as a miscellaneous letter arrives, the carbon which it answers is destroyed. All other carbons are destroyed at the end of three months. January carbons, for instance, are thrown away at the beginning of April, February carbons at the beginning of May. This system keeps dead material constantly cleaned out. For a smaller office, a single drawer divided into three compartments would answer the same purpose.

In order to be sure that all of its letters are uniform, one large company has devised a standard sample letter (Figure 18) on which every stenographer and typist is required to pattern her work. This standard form shows

*How the special
file is used*

G. M. JOHNSTON

'26 WATER STREET

Milwaukee

August 9, 1918

STENOGRAPHERS AND TYPISTS

J. A. Blaisdell Company
2967 Main Street
Indianapolis, Indiana

Gentlemen:

As we desire uniformity of style in the arrangement of all letters leaving our office, you will please use this letter as a model for future correspondence.

The "M" of Milwaukee should be below and slightly to the right of the printed heading; the date should be centered underneath exactly as shown.

Begin the letter addressing the customer one space beneath the dot on the upper left-hand side. (Where the margins are to be unusually wide, because of a short letter, start one space below but to the right of the dot.) In cases where the letter is to a small town and no street address is given, show the city on the second line and the state on the third line. Where a four-line address is necessary, start on a line with the dot. In the case of a five-line address start one space above the dot.

The left-hand margins of paragraphs must be in line with the heading; double space between paragraphs.

In closing, use the phrase "Yours very truly," starting exactly in the middle of the sheet; sign "G. M. Johnston Company," starting underneath the "s" of "Yours." When the letter is to be signed place the word "By" two spaces below and immediately underneath the initial "G." Have the correspondent's and the stenographer's initials on a line with the left-hand margin, two spaces lower than "G. M. Johnston Company." Regulate the width of margin by the length of the letter to be written.

When the letter cannot be written on one sheet use a special second sheet, of the same grade of stationery.

Show "-2-" thus, two spaces below the heading, and continue the letter three spaces lower than the "-2-" with the same width margin as on the first sheet.

Yours very truly,
G. M. Johnston Company

By

GMJ:MN

FIGURE 18: There's no excuse for errors in the style when each stenographer and typist has a standard letter like this for a guide. It shows exactly where to place the date line and

salutation, the proper margin, the correct close, and so on. And it's about as quick a way as there is of showing the new stenographer or typist just what is expected of her.

Why a standard style improves letters

how to place the date and salutation; the correct words to use in the opening and close; proper margins; the method of writing letters which are more than one page long, and so on. Instead of a list of negative instructions telling what not to do, the stenographer has before her a complete letter correctly typed. In case she is in doubt on any point, a glance at the standard form shows her the correct way.

Another device used by this firm is a small dot printed on the letter sheet, showing the proper place to begin typing the date. The first figure of the date, when it is written, conceals the dot. At the point where the address ought to appear another dot serves to show the typist the proper place to start. This method standardizes all letters.

Handling outgoing mail

Mailing letters, unlike receiving them, is a problem of assembly at a common point. In one office, the mail boys collect signed letters every hour and carry them to the mailing room. Four o'clock is the latest hour for receiving regular mail, so the mailing clerks have plenty of time to fold, seal, and stamp all letters ready for sending. A rack, arranged in the same manner as the sorting clerk's desk, receives these letters.

All outgoing letters are counted by departments, in order that the accounting room may make the correct distribution of postage charges. Sealing and stamping are done automatically, and a counter is attached, which records the number of letters passing through; this also is done automatically.

Where short cuts and machines reduce costs

Several types of mailing machines may be secured. Some are driven by motors, while others are hand-operated. Some do nothing but seal envelopes, others only affix stamps. The volume of mail which your office has to handle will determine whether you will pay \$15 or \$100 for a mailing-machine; but you need not write more than 50 letters in the course of a day to make it profitable to introduce a mechanical device to take the place of the mail boy with his gummy sponge.

Thus, at practically every point in the routine handling of the mail, it is now possible to introduce a machine or a short-cut method that will save time and make the mails do more for your business—at lower per-letter cost.

CHAPTER XI

MAKING THE OFFICE FORCE RESPONSIBLE

Actual ignorance about the possibilities of a job often prevails even among employers.

A boy who had been doing piece work in a woodworking factory secured a position in a large Chicago office. He was set to work in the mailing room with several other boys doing up packages of standard-sized paper ready to be sent to prospective customers.

The average amount of work that had been turned out and was considered a fair day's work was 50 packages. By arranging his materials and wrapping paper where he could reach them quickly, the new boy was easily able to finish 150 packages before quitting time. Trained to do away with lost motions by his previous experience, in which a bigger output had meant larger pay, he wrapped three packages to every one for his companions. According to the standard which he set, they had been less than $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ efficient, yet their employers had not realized the big waste that was occurring.

While this is an exceptional case, it is true that in many offices there is a great discrepancy between the actual performance and the normal performance. Only by determining of what a fair day's work consists can you do away with waste and have a correct basis on which to fix salaries.

Time studies in many offices show that gossip across the machines is one of the greatest sources of losing time among stenographers. In order to minimize this waste, the office manager in a manufacturing concern devised the successful plan for placing the desks shown in Figure 19. The two correspondents and their assistants had desks together. The two stenographers who did most of the work for these four men and assisted the four stenographers doing general work, sat beside the correspondents.

The manager himself sat behind the four stenographers who did general work. This arrangement, he found, did

*How time
studies help
in the office*

*This plan cut
time-wasting
gossip*

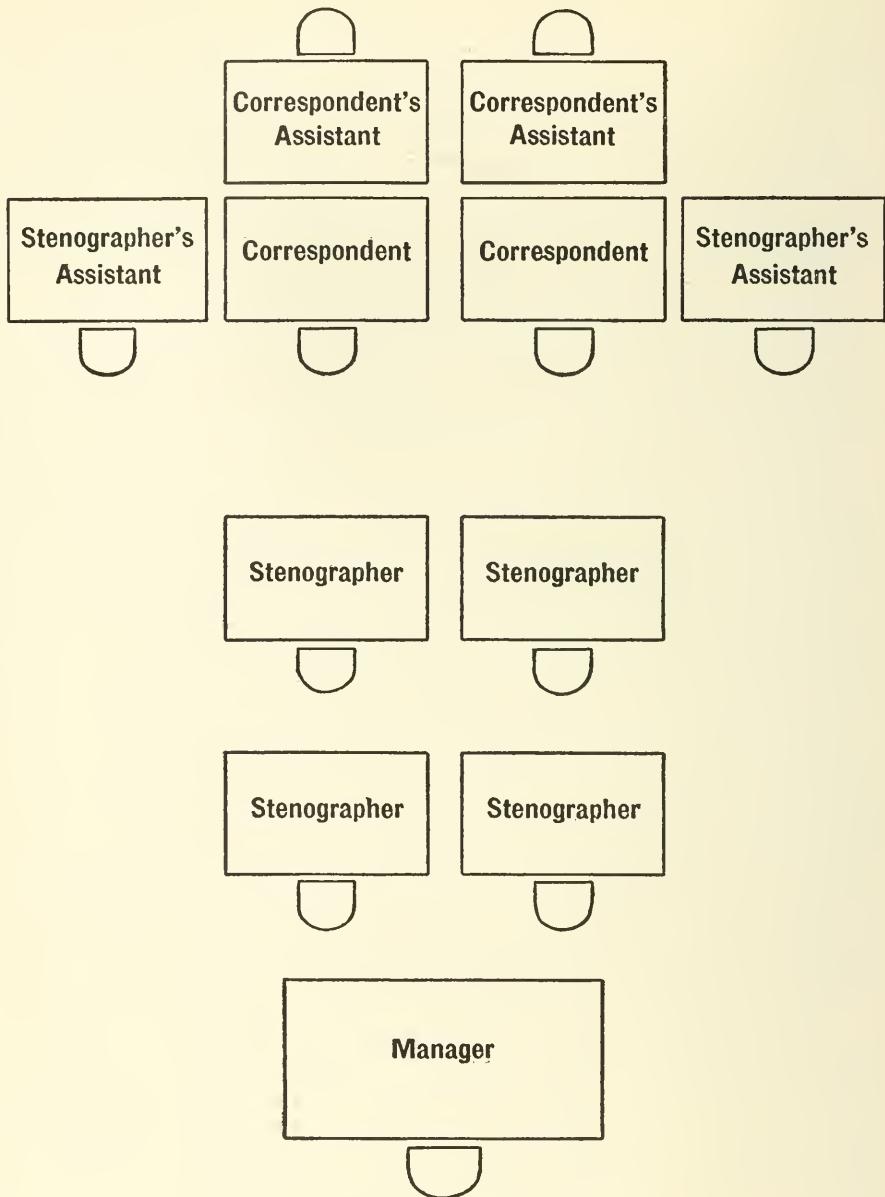


FIGURE 19: Office gossip seems a pretty serious problem sometimes, for it's one of the worst time-wasters. Even so, it isn't always as difficult to remedy as it seems. One man-

ager worked it by simply rearranging the desks as shown here. The manager has a full view of all the other desks. The plan he used is described in greater detail on pages 205 and 207.

away almost entirely with the gossiping which had gone on from desk to desk.

Better pay for better work

Watchfulness, however, is not the sole or even the principal means on which the scientific manager relies to secure good work. Supervision of labor for purposes of discipline is bound to prove costly. For really effective work, the laborer himself must be eager to do his best. The incentive must come from within, rather than from without. The one method that is almost invariably certain to produce the desired results quickly is to give better pay for better work.

It is true, however, that it is nearly always necessary for the "man above" to discover and correct the errors which lessen the effectiveness of his employees. They themselves generally cannot or will not put forth their best efforts without guidance.

In one office, which employs several stenographers, the aim is not so much to correct the employee who has learned wrong methods as to train her in the correct way at the start. Newcomers are not thrown at once into the midst of company affairs, but are instructed for a few days in handling the correspondence which they will receive. A great many letters written in this concern include technical terms familiar to the trade, and on her first day a new girl copies a list of 500 of these. After she has copied them several times she spends a few hours inventing shorthand signs for those which might give her trouble in taking dictation.

*Breaking in
the new
stenographer*

No definition of terms is given on the list, but the student becomes familiar with the meanings by the second degree in her training, which consists of copying engineers' reports, estimates, contracts, interdepartmental letters and notes as a means of increasing her vocabulary of technical terms.

*She becomes
competent
quickly*

After finishing this second step she takes light dictation, such as acknowledgment of orders, and non-technical letters from men who are known as easy dictators. This training usually takes a week or 10 days, and the novice in that time loses her nervousness, becomes familiar with names of departments and the men in them, knows her associates and becomes a fixture in the establishment. She is able to approach her duties in a competent way.

Bad methods of working, improper working conditions, lack of proper standards or simply a failure on the

What standardization can do

part of employer or employee to realize the possibilities of a job are bound to result in a lowering of normal production. The remedy lies in studying scientifically the possibilities of every job in advance, and then standardizing the operations of the office. With such standards fixed it is possible to set salaries on a uniform basis.

Figure 20 shows the results of an investigation covering 50 offices. These standards represent the average production for the different kinds of work in a large variety of concerns. Special conditions, of course, cause variations in offices. Where letters, for instance, are highly technical, it is really impossible to write as many as where they are simpler.

A "book of standards" may help

If the amount of work is sufficient to warrant it, it is well to have a "book of standards" which clearly defines the method of performing every operation and the standard rate for it. Here is an illustration of the way in which such a book reads in a large concern:

ADDRESSING SECTION

Standard based on \$5 salary per week.

3-Line Hand Addressing Operation No. 120	4-Line Hand Addressing Operation No. 121
---------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------

Addressing Envelops

1. Name
2. Town
3. State

Addressing Envelops

1. Name
2. Street address
3. Town
4. State

Standard 108 per hour. Standard 87 per hour.

Proper pay usually gets results

The incentive for employees to reach the standard set for any operation is the spur of pay and promotion. A piece rate puts every worker doing one kind of work on the same basis. If the rate is fairly set, it is just both to employer and employee; moreover, it gives the employee an incentive to prove his real quality by doing more than the standard task.

The unit of pay for stenographers varies in different offices. One concern pays for the number of words written, another for the number of lines, and still another for the number of square inches of typewritten matter. A simple device can be attached to the typewriter which will register each time the space bar is touched, thus

Mail-handling Standards

Operation	Conditions	Hourly rate
Opening letters and sorting them for distribution	A Careful first reading	60
	B Hasty first reading	200
Registering orders	Fully interpreted	200
Writing orders	Based on orders averaging five items	20
Dictating letters	Based on letters averaging $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page in length	35
Typing letters	Based on letters averaging $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page in length	15
Folding and enclosing letters	Spurt speed is possible on this work in most offices	500
Stamping envelopes	A By hand, speed possible for only an hour or so	3,000
	B Hand machines	3,000
	C Power machines	10,000
Writing invoices	A When description is brief—an average length of five lines	75
	B When description is complicated—an average length of five lines	20
Addressing envelopes	A By hand	125
	B On the typewriter	225

FIGURE 20: "How long should it take?" is answered by the chart shown here. Under normal conditions you would be justified in expecting these results from employees of fair

ability. The experience of 50 office managers was studied in preparing this chart which is more fully described on the opposite page. It may help you set a standard in your office.

.08	.17	.25	.33	.42	.50	.58	.67	.75	.83	.92	1.00
.17	.33	.50	.67	.83	1.00	1.17	1.33	1.50	1.67	1.83	2.00
.25	.50	.75	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00
.33	.67	1.00	1.33	1.67	2.00	2.33	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.67	4.00
.42	.83	1.25	1.67	2.08	2.50	2.92	3.33	3.75	4.17	4.58	5.00
.50	1.00	1.50	2.00	2.50	3.00	3.50	4.00	4.50	5.00	5.50	6.00
.58	1.17	1.75	2.33	2.92	3.50	4.08	4.67	5.25	5.83	6.42	7.00
.67	1.33	2.00	2.67	3.33	4.00	4.67	5.33	6.00	6.67	7.33	8.00
.75	1.50	2.25	3.00	3.75	4.50	5.25	6.00	6.75	7.50	8.25	9.00
.83	1.67	2.50	3.33	4.17	5.00	5.83	6.67	7.50	8.33	9.17	10.00
.92	1.83	2.75	3.67	4.58	5.50	6.42	7.33	8.25	9.17	10.08	11.00
1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00
1.08	2.17	3.25	4.33	5.42	6.50	7.58	8.67	9.75	10.83	11.92	13.00
1.17	2.33	3.50	4.67	5.83	7.00	8.17	9.33	10.50	11.67	12.83	14.00
1.25	2.50	3.75	5.00	6.25	7.50	8.75	10.00	11.25	12.50	13.75	15.00
1.33	2.67	4.00	5.33	6.67	8.00	9.33	10.67	12.00	13.33	14.67	16.00
1.42	2.83	4.25	5.67	7.08	8.50	9.92	11.33	12.75	14.17	15.58	17.00
1.50	3.00	4.50	6.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	12.00	13.50	15.00	16.50	18.00
1.58	3.17	4.75	6.33	7.92	9.50	11.08	12.67	14.25	15.83	17.42	19.00
1.67	3.33	5.00	6.67	8.33	10.00	11.67	13.33	15.00	16.67	18.33	20.00
1.75	3.50	5.25	7.00	8.75	10.50	12.25	14.00	15.75	17.50	19.25	21.00
1.83	3.67	5.50	7.33	9.17	11.00	12.83	14.67	16.50	18.33	20.17	22.00
1.92	3.83	5.75	7.67	9.58	11.50	13.42	15.33	17.25	19.17	21.08	23.00
2.00	4.00	6.00	8.00	10.00	12.00	14.00	16.00	18.00	20.00	22.00	24.00
2.08	4.17	6.25	8.33	10.42	12.50	14.58	16.67	18.75	20.83	22.92	25.00
2.17	4.33	6.50	8.67	10.83	13.00	15.17	17.33	19.50	21.67	23.83	26.00
2.25	4.50	6.75	9.00	11.25	13.50	15.75	18.00	20.25	22.50	24.76	27.00
2.33	4.67	7.00	9.33	11.67	14.00	16.33	18.67	21.00	23.33	25.67	28.00
2.42	4.83	7.25	9.67	12.08	14.50	16.92	19.33	21.75	24.17	26.58	29.00
2.50	5.00	7.50	10.00	12.50	15.00	17.50	20.00	22.50	25.00	27.50	30.00
2.58	5.17	7.75	10.33	12.92	15.50	18.08	20.67	23.25	25.83	28.42	31.00
2.66	5.33	8.00	10.67	13.33	16.00	18.67	21.33	24.00	26.67	29.33	32.00
2.75	5.50	8.25	11.00	13.75	16.50	19.25	22.00	24.75	27.50	30.25	33.00
2.83	5.67	8.50	11.33	14.17	17.00	19.83	22.67	25.50	28.33	31.17	34.00
2.92	5.83	8.75	11.67	14.58	17.50	20.42	23.33	26.25	29.17	32.08	35.00
3.00	6.00	9.00	12.00	15.00	18.00	21.00	24.00	27.00	30.00	33.00	36.00
3.08	6.17	9.25	12.33	15.42	18.50	21.58	24.67	27.75	30.83	33.92	37.00
3.17	6.33	9.50	12.67	15.83	19.00	22.17	25.33	28.50	31.67	34.83	38.00
3.25	6.50	9.75	13.00	16.25	19.50	22.75	26.00	29.25	32.50	35.75	39.00
3.33	6.67	10.00	13.33	16.67	20.00	23.33	26.67	30.00	33.33	36.67	40.00
3.42	6.83	10.25	13.67	17.08	20.50	23.92	27.33	30.75	34.17	37.58	41.00
3.50	7.00	10.50	14.00	17.50	21.00	24.50	28.00	31.50	35.00	38.50	42.00

FIGURE 21: This is the scale used for measuring typewritten work, as described on page 211. It is made of transparent celluloid and is placed over the typewriting flush with the

upper left-hand corner. The number of square inches is shown in the lower right-hand corner of the typewriting. It's especially useful where a bonus system of payment is in operation.

automatically counting the number of words written; another device counts the number of lines written by registering every time the carriage is shifted.

*How to measure
the stenog-
rapher's work*

A few unnecessary strokes on the space bar or shifts of the carriage, however, will boost the operator's salary considerably. This difficulty is done away with in a Philadelphia office by having an assistant to the chief stenographer, who inspects and actually measures all letters. Her task is made simple by a transparent sheet of celluloid (Figure 21) which is divided into half-inch squares. All letters are turned in to her by the stenographers, and she measures each one with this sheet. Placing it over the body of the letter, which excludes the salutation and complimentary close, the figure at the lower right-hand corner tells at a glance the total number of square inches credited to the stenographer. She records on a separate card for each girl the number of inches on each letter, and these amounts are totaled every day. The sum of the amounts for a week forms the basis on which salaries are computed.

Little more than the application of accurate knowledge to every operation in the routine work of the office will save many dollars in the course of a year. Definite standards give the manager a positive method of identifying his best workers. Knowing the amount of work done by each individual and each department, and the price paid for it, he can easily tell where expense is too large or where more money may profitably be used. Standards in the office finally come to mean lower costs and in addition better work.

*Standards of
work save
expense*

CHAPTER XII

REDUCING OFFICE EXPENSE BY AUTOMATIC ROUTINE

How would you have met this problem?

These difficulties certainly looked big

Five thousand unanswered letters in the house, a thousand more coming in every day, dozens of orders arriving with every mail, each order and letter requiring a technical expert's handling, and only one correspondent in the house trained as a technical expert is in a few words the situation described by the manager who writes of his experiences in this chapter.

This rather unusual congestion in our correspondence was apparently caused by the success of a new product and the method we used to market it. We always had sold entirely to professional people. Their orders ranged between \$25 and \$100 each—cash down. Then we found it advisable to make a change in our product. This enabled us to sell the same article in a cheaper form for \$5—and we allowed it to be paid in instalments.

Orders and letters began pouring in as soon as we advertised this departure. It had been comparatively simple for the correspondence department to handle four \$25 cash orders; it was quite a different task to dispose of 20 \$5 instalment orders. The clerical labor involved in a \$5 instalment order was much greater. When we sold for cash the money was deposited in the bank and that ended the transaction, in the majority of cases. But when the \$5 order was entered and the goods shipped, that was just the beginning and several other parts of the transaction had to be performed. Only \$1 had been deposited in the bank, and, theoretically, another dollar was to come along each month for four months. As each of these dollars arrived, another clerical operation had to be performed; each time one failed to arrive, still more correspondence and clerical labor were involved.

The methods we adopted to relieve the resulting congestion and put our correspondence department on a soundly effective basis will probably be interesting to every business man who has letters to write, for we have secured some remarkable results. Today, letters never lie overnight unanswered. The volume of our correspondence is greater than ever, but no longer do we need to employ high-priced correspondents to handle it. At the time of the severest congestion, we were hiring assistants so rapidly that not enough room could be found in the office. Many had to sit at upturned packing boxes which served as desks. They were tucked away in every spare corner of the building, on three different floors. They had to be trained hurriedly. Indeed, so rapidly were they hired, that little care could be taken in selecting them. Now the work proceeds in an orderly manner, without rush. It is handled by employees who are thoroughly trained to do their work in the best and quickest way.

The results obtained

The first step was to try hiring trained letter writers. That proved a failure. We discovered no one who appeared able to adapt himself to our quite unusual conditions. We then called upon the employment department for intelligent clerks. Some of the applicants we accepted had only grammar school educations. Others were high school graduates. None had done similar work. We instructed these clerks to read the correspondence and sort all letters, for a period of several weeks, into a dozen or so broad classes. We then examined this work thoroughly and prepared a set of form letters and form paragraphs to cover the classes selected. By means of these letters and paragraphs the readers were able to answer whole batches of letters by simply jotting down on each one the numbers of the appropriate form letter or series of paragraphs. The paragraphs were built up along lines similar to those described in "The Automatic Letter Writer."

Using un-trained correspondents

This was the first important step. We had to be sure we were right in every detail, however, and as we went along we thought it best to hold frequent consultations. Every little point was thoroughly thrashed out and settled then and there just as soon as it came to our attention. In these consultations we often took up questions similar to these:

How the letters were answered

*House policies
are easily
adhered to*

"What shall we say to a customer who says so and so? What shall we do if a customer does such and such a thing? What attitude are we going to take when the customer . . .?" Whenever we came to a decision, we recorded it, made it "the policy of the house," and gave it a place in our "policy book." Each correspondent and reader was required to study these policies and to act accordingly. They learned their lessons thoroughly. In fact, the manager, who relied upon his judgment and memory, was occasionally criticised by correspondents for giving orders contrary to the "policy book's" rulings. If the manager felt that the policy questioned was wrong, he could follow only one course—take up the problem with our executive board. He could not under any circumstances instruct the correspondent to act contrary to the "policy book's" rulings.

*What happened
to the letters*

These policies were, of course, general in their nature and left room for a certain amount of individual judgment. But they had the effect of harmonizing and unifying all our correspondence. It will be interesting to tell exactly how we arranged to have the letters read and answered. After passing through the mail-opening department, they are delivered to the correspondents—or readers, as we call them—in folders, which contain just 25 letters each. The correspondents read every letter carefully. Two thirds of the letters, we find, can be answered at once. These are handled whenever possible—and it is possible in 90% of the cases, we find—by either standard form letters or form paragraphs. The paragraph system we use will be described in greater detail later. When it is necessary to consult records before answering, the reader fills out a printed form, noting thereon the data desired, as well as any other information pertinent to the inquiry. This form is arranged in such a way that very little writing by the correspondent is necessary.

*When you must
refer to records*

The letter next is sent to the proper department for the desired information. This department looks up the information, writes it in on the "remarks" space, and the letter is then returned to the correspondence department for further attention. The reader next marks in the numbers of the suitable paragraphs and the letter goes to the typing department, where it is typewritten. The very fact that correspondence, at the time the reor-

ganization began, was coming in faster than it could be handled, directed special attention to relieving this congestion with form paragraphs and form letters. Whenever a letter is not covered by existing paragraphs or forms, it is marked "special" and given to a trained correspondent to answer. If he finds that the same question is repeated by 10 different persons, even over an extended period, a paragraph is written to cover it. This paragraph is sent to the advertising department, where it is worked over with as much care as though it were copy for an advertisement to appear in a magazine with a circulation of a million. It is then given a number, a master copy is written with a duplicator ribbon, and sufficient copies are duplicated upon cards so that one can be furnished to each typist and correspondent. If any question is asked more than 10 times in any one day, a form letter answering it is made out.

These form paragraphs and letters are classified and numbered according to subjects. Great care is taken to make each paragraph complete, and to have it deal with one subject only. All the reasonable variations are given careful consideration, and paragraphs are written to cover them.

Attention is paid, also, to the different moods expressed by customers. All complaints, for example, are handled in a uniformly courteous manner, no matter how provoking the customer may be. If, as occasionally happens, a certain paragraph only partially answers the customer, the reader jots down an extra sentence to make it fit exactly. This goes on a slip of paper, and the reader adds instructions directing the typist to include the extra sentence in the proper paragraph. As it stands, this system of ours contains over 500 separate paragraphs and 100 form letters.

The paragraphs—as stated—are carefully indexed by subjects. The correspondents, however, soon learn the most important ones, so they find it unnecessary to consult the index for each letter. Quite often, in fact, you will hear our correspondents saying something like this to each other:

"What do you do when a customer says he will not pay his account unless we agree to send him certain free supplies?"

"Oh, I give him K16, A24 and K36."

Suppose a new paragraph is needed

Where the customer's mood must be considered

The index

*Bringing out
the paragraph's
strong points*

"Is that so? Why don't you give him B18, K36?"

"Because policy number 32 says—," and so on.

When you look up the fine points involved in a conversation like this, you usually find that there is some delicate difference between the paragraphs mentioned. No harm would have resulted, probably, if either course had been taken. But it shows the remarkable fitness of each paragraph for the work intended, and the intelligence with which they are used.

On one occasion, an executive of the company discovered in the files a letter which pleased him greatly. "Who wrote this letter?" he asked the head of the department. "It is a gem. You ought to encourage that dictator, for the letter certainly shows ability." On investigation, we found that the letter consisted of paragraphs only which have been written at various times. Even the executive had supposed it was a personally dictated letter.

*Why para-
graphs have the
personal touch*

It seems probable that the letters written by this paragraph system are superior to the average, specially dictated, personal letter. The reason for that is simple. More care has been devoted to writing the paragraphs, and phrasing them in precisely the right way, than could ordinarily be given to the work by a dictator, even under the most advantageous circumstances. Hours, in fact, have been given to the preparation of some of the form paragraphs, and before being finally adopted, they have often been written and rewritten time and time again until they were really satisfactory.

*Making a game
out of the work*

In "dictating" letters under our paragraph system, high school girls have been able to handle as many as 50 or 60 of them an hour. The greatest amount of time goes to reading the customers' letters. From the average dictator who personally formulates each reply, it is hard to get 150 letters a day. Members of our correspondence department show great interest and enthusiasm. They worked splendidly when letters were coming in faster than they could be answered. An interesting game was then made of the work, and all took part. A large bulletin was placed on the wall in full view of the whole department. This was ruled off into a large number of squares. I have already explained that letters are given to the readers in batches of 25 in folders. So we wrote in the squares on the bulletin the figures "25"

as many times as there were folders of unanswered letters. When a folder was handled and turned in, we canceled one "25." As rapidly as new letters arrived, more "25s" were placed in the blank spaces. The readers struggled with the stream of letters with energy and determination. They did not seem to consider their task hard work, but rather a sport.

When you're swamped with letters

During this strenuous period we held a daily discussion class for the readers. This class dealt with problems coming up in the correspondence. Various methods of handling typical cases were discussed and standardized. New paragraphs were suggested. Misunderstandings were uncovered and corrected. These discussions kept the whole force working harmoniously. We also hold a weekly class for correspondents. This class meets Tuesday evenings, the company providing supper. It takes up the general subject of writing. We believe that greater progress can be made by not confining these lessons to writing letters for the firm—for then the papers might be judged solely on their relationship to the company's problems—but by making them cover the field of writing in general. We have, for example, considered the short story as a model. The ideal we aim at is to have the tone of our letters as much as possible like one person talking with another—not stilted. To emphasize this, frequent exercises are given. We act out some incident in the class, have it reported verbatim, and afterwards rewritten by the class. We never permit anything to be written in a letter that would not sound natural and fit if spoken. This class has developed some remarkable talent. One girl, only 17 years old, showed much ability. This girl's talent would probably never have been discovered in the ordinary routine of a business office. She was shy and retiring. She came to the company as a typist, and proved a failure at that. We tried her at various other jobs, but she did not make a startling success. Finally, she attended the class of her own accord, and submitted some essays that were quite remarkable. She has become a valuable employee, and has increased her earning power because the opportunity was given her to show what she could accomplish.

It often helps to do this

This "correspondent" a typist

It might seem that this plan places the business of the company in the hands of inexperienced clerks. How

*This helps you
to keep in touch*

can the management watch all the details? Of course, it is impossible for any one person to read carefully, in a week, one day's mail. This problem of control has been solved with our complaint record. A sample of the form we use is shown in Figure 22. The headings are as follows:

Manufacturing faults
Technical faults
Accounting and recording
Loss of money or goods
Errors in packing and shipping
New wants of customers
Correspondence errors

*Keeping track
of complaints*

Each correspondent has on her desk one of the sheets illustrated, and each type of complaint—as you will notice—has a number. As the letters are read, every complaint that comes to the correspondent's notice is recorded by simply scoring a tallymark, as boys score runs in a baseball game. At the end of the week, these sheets are gathered, totaled, and a graphic record is given to the general manager (Figure 23). The record for four weeks is shown on each graphic sheet. This enables the busy manager not only to get a digest of the various complaints weekly, but to compare them with previous weeks and grasp the situation at a glance. The record is an effective means of control.

*How the typing
output was
tripled*

When we began to train our typists, their output was far from satisfactory, although they were apparently industrious enough. From the beginning they had always been treated fairly and no petty restrictions placed upon them. As a consequence, there was little tendency on the part of any of them to "stall." However, in spite of their apparent industry, the output of the department was far less than we believed possible. After certain alterations, which I shall describe in detail, the average output was just about tripled. This, I am confident, is a result that can be obtained—at least in part—in many concerns where similar methods are used.

We started first of all to improve the physical arrangement of the office. Desks were crowded closely together in rows of four. Each time a typist found it necessary to leave her desk, she disturbed possibly three other workers in the same row. This condition we remedied by placing

RECORD OF COMPLAINTS HANDLED BY

Martha Hilton

Week Beginning

4/24/18

No.	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	TOTAL
50	/ /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / / / /	/ / / /	/ / / / / /	18
1	- / /	/ / / / /	/ / / /	/ / / / / /	/ / / /	/ / / / / /	27
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
60	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /			4
1	- / /	/ / / / /	/ / / /	/ / / / / /	/ / / /	/ / / / / /	
8							
9							
100							

FIGURE 22: Here's a form that helps the management watch details. The numbers in the first column refer to standardized complaints. When a complaint comes in, it is

classified under the proper number and a tally-mark placed opposite that number. The totals are pictured from time to time on a graphic record like the one which is shown below.

Graphic Record of Complaints by Weeks.

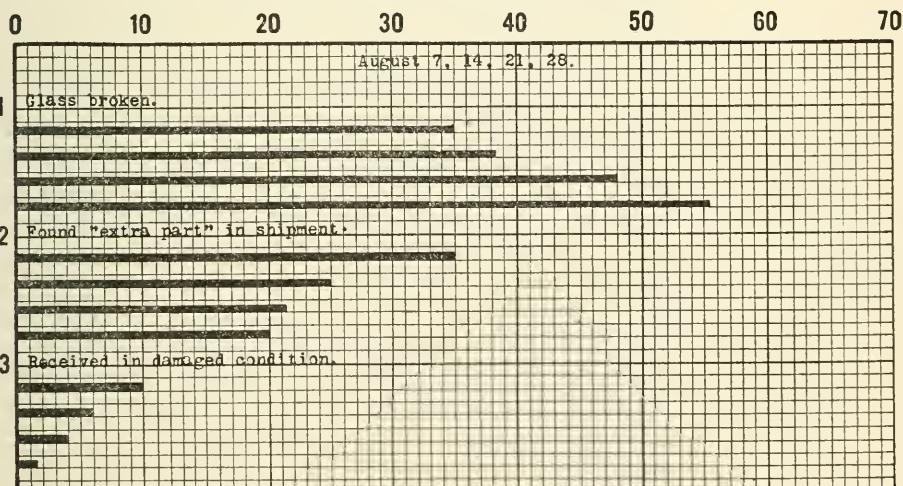


FIGURE 23: It's easy for the manager to follow complaints when a graphic record like this is placed before him each week. He can see at a glance which complaints are the most

frequent and which departments are concerned. It is also much easier to watch "symptomatic details," and when conditions warrant action to apply the proper remedy more intelligently.

Assigning the work fairly

the desks in rows of two, with an aisle on each side. Thus, when it was necessary for one of the girls to leave her seat, no one was disturbed. The next step came in assigning the work. Formerly it was placed in large boxes, and each typist helped herself as she required it. This resulted in some girls getting too much and others not enough, while often some would pick "easy" work, to the disadvantage of others. This condition we remedied by having the department manager assign the work, giving each girl just enough to keep her busy and no more. Stationery also proved to be a problem calling for attention. There were four kinds of letterheads, 10 kinds of envelopes, half a dozen kinds of booklets and other miscellaneous types of stationery. Each typist had a supply of every kind. This material she kept in her desk. Many times a day the drawers were pulled out. It meant a lot of waste motion.

Where do you keep your stationery?

We remedied this condition by having special cabinets or racks made which held not only a small quantity of the necessary stationery, but finished and unfinished work as well. One of these cabinets was placed on each typist's desk within easy reach. A small number of letterheads—enough for an hour or so—was kept under the typewriter, thus avoiding the necessity even of extending the hand so short a distance as 18 inches to the cabinet. Often, in the midst of her work, a typist would discover a shortage of a certain kind of stationery and there was an inevitable delay until her stock was replenished. This we remedied by making it the duty of the inspector to keep the cabinet supplied constantly.

A check on the typist

Formerly, there had been no reliable record of the work done by any one operator. The correspondents had no time to ascertain the quantity of work, and little inclination to criticise the quality. There were about 10 different kinds of typewriting done in the department and although it was known that there was such and such a number of girls working in the department, that there was so much work of various kinds done and to be done, it was not known just how much of each kind of work Ruth Davis did, nor how long it took her to do it.

Certain types of the work were standardized, therefore, and an inspector was detailed to examine, correct, and keep careful record of the output of each girl. A daily record of the various types of work done by each girl, and

THE COMPLETED ROUTINE

the length of time it took her to do it, was kept. This record showed some startling results. Those getting the highest salaries were not the most efficient, and some of those who appeared to be the most industrious were not the speediest operators. We experienced some difficulty at first in getting a correct time record. But we finally solved the problem by using a simple time stamp, and giving each girl a time card for each batch of work of a certain kind that was given her. The work was stamped with the beginning and the finishing time. We arranged careful inspections for five different kinds of errors, classed according to their importance as follows:

- Class 1, errors in addresses
- Class 2, errors in context
- Class 3, errors in spelling
- Class 4, errors in typing
- Class 5, erasures

Each operator was shown daily her record of work and errors. I have sketched briefly a few of the most important details of the plan by which the effectiveness of the department as a whole was improved. The work was not all finished in a day, and was accomplished only by constant study and observation. However, with this preliminary work done we were in a position to improve the individual records of the typists. As soon as we had reliable comparative records, showing the average work accomplished every hour by each operator, charts of various sorts were posted on the bulletin board to show the progress of each worker. These had an immediate effect on results.

Careful observation for waste motion resulted in a great improvement. For example, we found that erasures constituted one of the most important sources of lost time. And we further discovered that of a large portion of the time the reason for erasures was that the girls were working in spurts. We urged them to write slowly and deliberately. Whenever this advice was followed, there was an immediate increase in product. The importance of the point was brought to the attention of the girls in about this way: "Suppose you were running a foot race. You are so anxious to win that you run at the highest possible speed. You run so fast and so recklessly that every 20 feet you trip or stumble.

What a time record may show

Putting the typists on their mettle

Some sources of lost time

*The hare or
the tortoise—
which?*

Would you break any speed records? You would not. If you reached the goal at all, you would be so exhausted from spurting, and lose so much time picking yourself up, that you would likely be the last to arrive. Suppose, on the contrary, another ran carefully and deliberately at a steady pace throughout the whole race, without once stumbling—who would win?"

*This fault is
easily corrected*

Each operator was taught that there was only one right way to put a piece of paper in the machine. We showed her how to do this without waste of time. By time studies we discovered that different operators took for this operation all the way from three hundredths of a minute to half a minute. If an operator took half a minute to adjust the letterhead in the machine and did this 60 times a day, that operation alone would require half an hour, whereas if done in the shortest possible time it ought to occupy not more than 0.03×60 or 1.8 minutes, leaving 28.2 minutes more in which to write letters. Another reason for inefficiency was improper sitting at the desk. Some girls would sit on the edge of their chairs, tipping at a dangerous angle and twisting their feet around the legs of the chairs. This is not an exaggeration. Many such cases were discovered. We taught them that it would pay them to sit well back in the chairs, with the feet placed squarely on the floor and head and shoulders erect.

*10,000 useless
motions saved*

One inexperienced operator, we observed, turned her head to read her copy on an average 20 times a minute. We pointed out to her that if she kept up that record for one day, consisting of $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours, she would have twisted her neck over 10,000 times. We suggested that she abandon this fatiguing habit and learn to read and remember at least 20 or 25 words for each twist of the head. Later, this observation led to the installation of a special copy-holding device which altogether obviated the turning of the head. All chairs and desks formerly were the same height, but, unfortunately, all of the operators were not. So we furnished cushions to those who needed to be elevated.

After eliminating the most obvious faults of the individual operators, we made preparations to establish a bonus system. We did not undertake to do this, however, until all external hindrances had been removed and each operator studied and her faults corrected as far as possible.

THE COMPLETED ROUTINE

Sound management does not set a merely theoretical standard, such as could be attained by none but the most experienced operators. Once a standard rate has been set it should not be changed unless the methods are also changed. It was therefore important to exercise great care in setting a standard which, while difficult to attain, should not be impossible. Had we taken the observations in the beginning and set a standard then it would have been fair neither to the worker nor the company. What we did, therefore, was to take a large number of tests on a standard piece of copy. These tests were taken at all hours of the day, and a number of tests taken on different days for each girl. Several weeks were required for completing these studies. We then made studies of each individual motion—(1) inserting the paper in the machine; (2) reading and copying address; (3) reading and typewriting copy; (4) taking the paper out of the machine and so on.

How a standard was set

Next, we took many tests on miscellaneous copy, and the results were averaged with the first tests. Finally, half-hourly tests were taken during the whole day on a number of the operators. All of the operations which were repeated, such as getting paper, inserting it in the machine, taking it out of the machine, and so on, were taken from the lowest figures in the time studies. We reasoned that all could be taught to do these operations in the most effective manner. The operation of typewriting copy was averaged, after eliminating the records of those who were hopelessly slow. On the other hand, the highest averages were not taken here as a standard, but lumped with the others. We found that 250 square inches per hour was a theoretical possibility with the operators then working. A deduction of 20% was made for unavoidable delays, and a standard of 200 square inches per hour set.

Making the tests

It is one thing to set the standard and quite another thing to attain it, not once, but steadily every day. Most of the typists were beginners, though some had several years' experience. The wages ranged from \$7 to \$15 per week. We fixed a standard wage of \$9.50 for convenience in figuring the bonus. This standard did not change the regular wages of the operators in any way. If, however, a girl reached the standard of 200 square inches per hour for the length of time she was

A standard wage helps

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*A table for
figuring bonus*

working upon a standardized operation, she got a bonus of 10 cents per hour. If she worked the entire week of 47½ hours at standard speed, this amounted to \$4.75. She got th's bonus, whether her salary was \$7 or \$15. The bonus was paid on a sliding scale, as follows:

Square inches per hour	Bonus per hour	Square inches per hour	Bonus per hour
138	\$0.0028	172	\$0.0300
140	.0040	174	.0320
142	.0056	176	.0340
144	.0068	178	.0360
146	.0088	180	.0400
148	.0104	182	.0440
150	.0120	184	.0480
152	.0132	186	.0520
154	.0148	188	.0560
156	.0160	190	.0600
158	.0176	192	.0640
160	.0200	194	.0680
162	.0208	196	.0720
164	.0224	198	.0760
166	.0240	200	.1000
168	.0260	220	.1400
170	.0280	240	.1800

*This point
should
be clearly
understood*

It was understood that no operator would lose her position because she was unable to reach the standard. The only penalty would be no bonus money in the pay envelop. At first, none of the girls believed it was possible to attain the standard. As the average number of square inches per hour when the records were first kept was 80, and this had gradually climbed up to 127, it is not surprising that they thought the standard too high. For several weeks no one earned any bonus, though considerable effort was put forth. Then we made rest and fatigue studies. One of the best and most faithful workers was selected for these studies. Records were taken by half-hour periods. The operator was first kept at work at a high speed during the entire day. Then she was given five minutes rest every hour, and every other hour a rest of 10 minutes. The results proved conclusively that four hours is too long a period to expect a typist to remain at the machine and do rapid and good work.

THE COMPLETED ROUTINE

Recess periods were therefore established as follows: one 10-minute recess in the morning at 10:30 and another in the afternoon at 3:30. During these recess periods the windows were thrown open and all employees encouraged to go outside and play. Later on, employees were allowed five minutes before recess and five minutes after recess, both in the morning and afternoon, this time to be taken at their own convenience. Thus employees now have 40 minutes of rest a day in a working day of $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours. That this pays the company is evident. However, although the bonus plan had been in operation for several weeks, and although the output had increased considerably, no one succeeded in reaching the standard. The girls all insisted that the standard was altogether too high.

*Recesses paid
this company
well*

At about this time one of the girls who had been below the average in speed was offered a prize of one dollar for the first hour she reached the standard. The very next day she came down to work determined to win that dollar. After several hours spent in the attempt, she won the prize. That broke the ice. It was possible, after all. The same prize was offered to all the girls in the department and thereafter, day after day, one after another won it until finally reaching the standard became a habit. It is a prevalent idea that one cannot work rapidly and accurately. The reverse is proved by all of our experience. In order to do rapid work, one must do careful and accurate work. It is a fact that almost amounts to a law. From the beginning, our employees were penalized heavily for errors. In type-writing, as in many other lines of work, it has been proved that in order to do rapid work one must concentrate. And this in itself decreases to a great extent the chance of error.

*Stimulating
the slow worker*

The very first attempt at increased speed, indeed, usually means an increase in errors, simply because the operator is straining herself to make a record. She is just a little bit doubtful as to whether or not she can attain the standard. But as she gains confidence, the errors gradually diminish until finally she has a much lower record of errors at the high speed than she had at the low speed. This statement is made only after carefully tabulating and charting thousands of observations. In this connection, it is perhaps well to emphasize the

*Will speed
sacrifice
accuracy?*

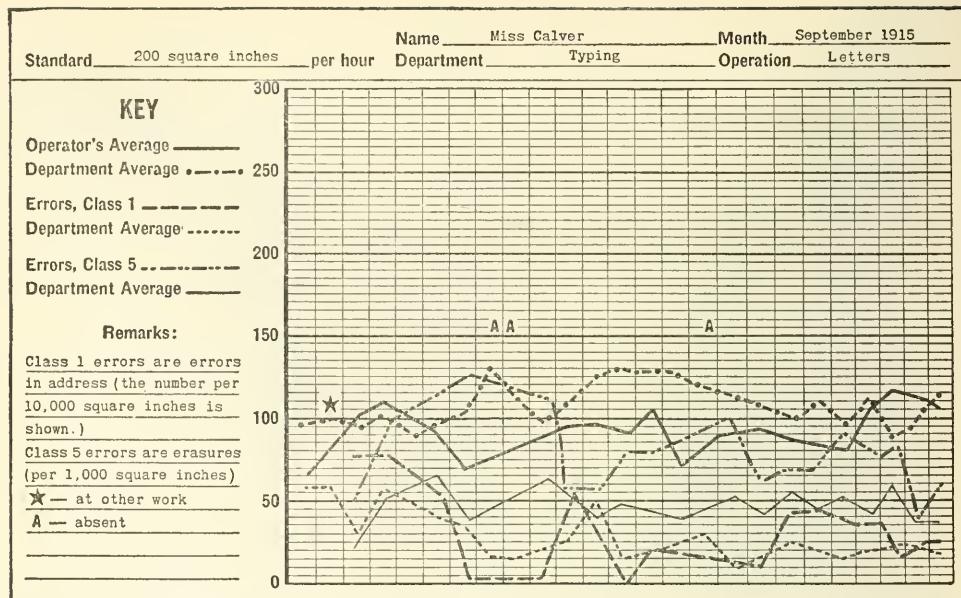


FIGURE 24: A monthly record like this is kept of the output of each typist showing graphically her progress from day to day. It is interesting to note how this particular girl's

record for September—shown above—contrasts with her record for January, four months later—shown in the chart below. The record is obviously as worth while as it is easy to keep.

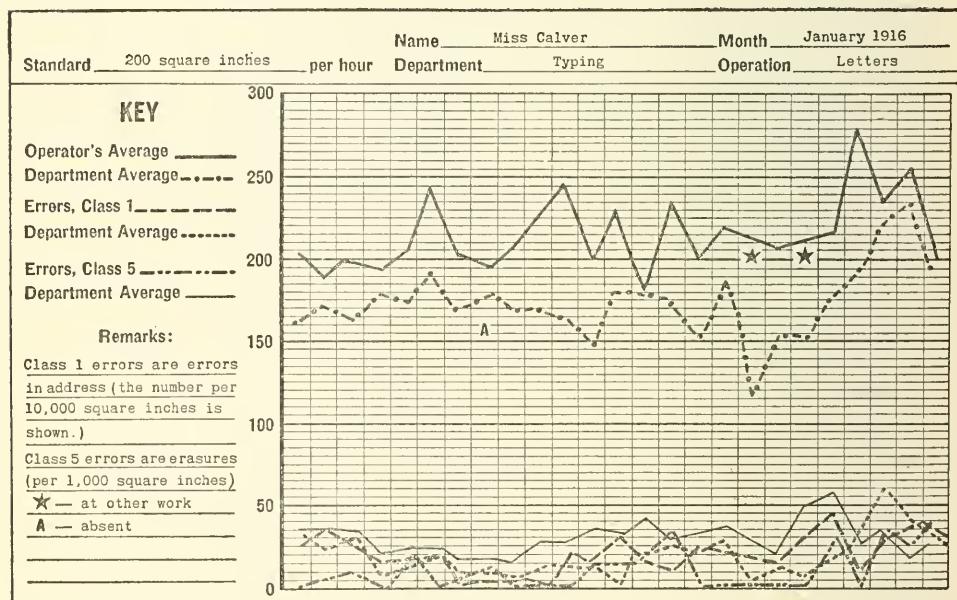


FIGURE 25: As an incentive to the girls to do good work, the management promises to give cards like this in place of letters of recommendation, if they wish to leave the company.

Besides illustrating one girl's progress, the card shows that errors do not increase proportionately with increased speed. Fastest workers are usually the most accurate, it's been found.

importance of confidence. It is important at all times that the worker be encouraged and coached, exactly as is an athlete. An employee must never be scolded for not reaching the standard, nor accused of "stalling."

A word might be said about office discipline. We have but little use for that word now. Another word—cooperation—has more effect with us. Each worker is permitted to choose her own code of ethics. The result of not attending to business—gossiping, "stalling," being tardy, absent, or doing any or all of the hundred and one other little things that often lower output in offices—is simply less bonus. That is punishment enough. Employees in our office are constantly seeking work—not an opportunity to get out of it. During the recess their natural desire to talk, laugh, and play is satisfied—the rest of the time work is the order of the day. By these methods the effectiveness of the entire typist department has been brought up from an average of 80 square inches per hour to nearly 200 square inches; and on several occasions the output has run over that figure. The average of some of the girls for an entire week has exceeded 230 square inches. One operator has reached an average of 278 square inches for one day.

I have confined my remarks to the typing of letters, but we handle several different kinds of work. The standard for typewriting envelopes from handwritten copy is 200 an hour. The standard for typewriting envelopes from typewritten copy is 240 an hour. The same bonus rate and standard wage applies on all standardized operations in the department. A careful daily record is kept of the work of each employee, showing the amount done, the number of errors, attendance, tardiness, and so on. This information is daily charted upon a card by months, as shown in Figures 24 and 25 and becomes a graphic record of the employee's work during the entire period of her employment.

Recently the management has announced to the employees that if at any time they find it to their advantage to leave the employ of the company, they will be given a copy of their graph cards for use in securing another position. It can readily be seen what valuable recommendations some of the cards will be. Even more interesting, perhaps, is the confidence thus shown by the company in its ability to hold its employees.

Do you get maximum results?

No need for office discipline here

A graphic record of work

CHAPTER XIII

MECHANICAL DEVICES THAT SPEED UP AUTOMATIC DICTATION

*Advantages
gained through
prepared para-
graphs*

Prepared paragraphs are coming so rapidly into more general use in the handling of business correspondence that several users of "The Automatic Letter Writer" have combined its contents with mechanical appliances, the combination resulting in a simple and easily workable system for handling correspondence.

These paragraphs, used properly, are certain to be productive of better results than when the same points must be dictated again and again. The strength of statements which must be stated at frequent intervals from memory must necessarily depend upon the mental condition of the dictator at each repetition. But with prepared paragraphs the facts are always stated in their most forceful way.

*How to keep
form para-
graphs flexible*

In order to make the use of paragraph systems easy for both correspondents and typists one card system company has designed some useful equipment for handling paragraphs. It will be seen that the cards in this equipment swing in a vertical position like the leaves of a book. This has proved to be a natural and easy way to use paragraph cards (Figure 26).

Each card is mounted individually and can be removed without disturbing any of the others. This is a convenience because at times paragraphs must be revised or replaced and the ease with which this can be done with this equipment facilitates keeping the system up to date. Then, too, frequently temporary conditions come up that make it desirable to insert for a time additions to an existing paragraph or to introduce a supplementary paragraph. For instance, where a stock of goods is exhausted and it is desirable to make some explanation to the customer, or where a substitute is being used



FIGURE 26: The typist finds especially convenient this simple method for handling form paragraphs. The cards are arranged like the leaves of a book and each one is mounted

separately so that any can be removed without the slightest danger of disturbing the others. This arrangement of course helps to a very great extent to keep the paragraphs up to date.

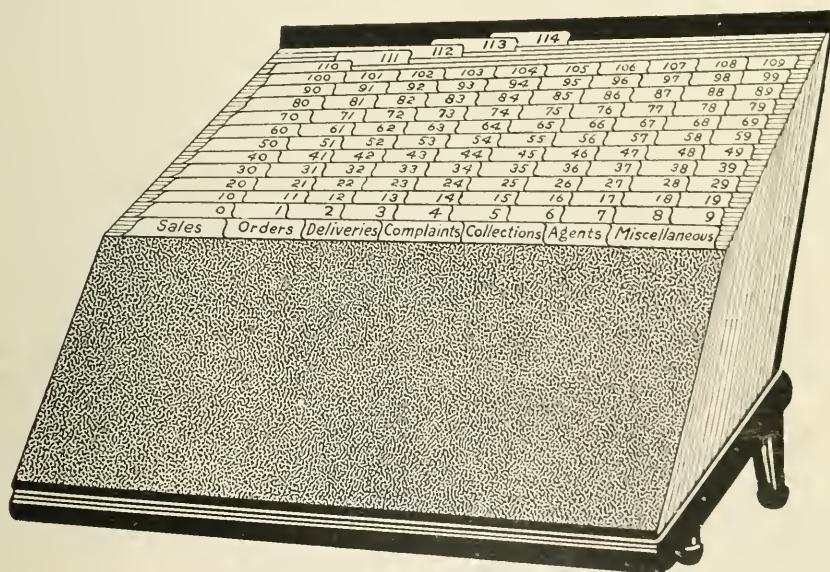


FIGURE 27: A stand like this placed on the typist's desk is easily referred to. As with the method shown above, probably one of its greatest advantages is the ease with which

changes can be made. New numbers can be added as new paragraphs are needed, and old paragraphs can be readily and quickly removed. It takes up very little space on the desk.



FIGURE 28: One executive was not satisfied with the method of handling form paragraphs, so he set to work and designed his own. The device shown here is the one he

hit upon for the use of his correspondents. It also serves as an index, and they find it mighty helpful. How the correspondents use it is described in more detail on the opposite page.



FIGURE 29: This is the device which the same executive designed for the use of his typists. The case containing the cards opens in two places. The cards are arranged so

that the index numbers are at all times plainly visible. Both typists and correspondents find that this particular arrangement of case and cards simplifies their work to a large extent.

temporarily and the reason for its use must be told, with this equipment an auxiliary card can be inserted instantly next to the paragraph to which it is related.

The stand on which the paragraph equipment is mounted can be placed at whatever angle is desired by the correspondent or typist in order to make it easy to read the copy quickly.

The chief requisites of an effective dictation system are a convenient index of paragraphs and letters, and some method whereby the forms themselves are quickly accessible. Several other devices on the market in addition to the one already described also are designed to offer both these advantages.

One executive had equipment specially made according to his own ideas. He has two separate devices—an upright rack for holding index panels for use by correspondents, and a case for cards which is used by the typists on which the form paragraphs clipped from "The Automatic Letter Writer" are pasted.

The paragraphs are indexed by typing on a narrow strip of paper the index number and first lines of paragraphs, and inserting the strip in a flattened transparent tube. This tube is then fixed in the panel as is shown in Figure 28. Different colored tubes are used to indicate various classes of paragraphs. For example, green represents opening paragraphs, yellow means closers, and plain white indicates the fillers.

Paragraphs are arranged in the panels according to subjects, such as collections, sales, complaints, and so on. It is evident that it is but a moment's work, therefore, to locate the desired forms and to give the necessary instructions to the typist.

The other piece of equipment in the office where this particular system was examined, is the case containing the cards. Figure 29 shows how it opens in two places and how the cards are held in position so that each index number is visible.

Another system which is proving satisfactory to many who use it, combines index and letters in one piece of equipment. In this one, the paragraphs are mounted on separate cards as shown in Figure 27. This equipment, according to the man who explained its use, is particularly convenient for the typists as it does not take up much room and is easy to handle.

*Devices that aid
the correspond-
ent*

*The right
paragraphs are
quickly found*

*This file
saves time*

*A convenient
index*

The first few cards he uses for index cards. Each product he sells has its own group of paragraphs and its own index card. Other cards list all paragraphs on such subjects as agents, collections, and so on. The letters indexed on the "agents" card are also found on the cards of letters on the various products. This cross index is simply for the convenience of the correspondent.

The executive who uses the first of these two systems reports that both correspondents and typists quickly memorize the paragraphs and after a few weeks they pay no further attention to the cards. The index rack he finds useful at times, as a correspondent may be for a moment in doubt as to the number of a certain paragraph, and can make sure by referring to its panels.

*Perhaps you
can use this
arrangement
also*

Furthermore, experience has shown in this office that typists make fewer mistakes when typing from memory than they do when working direct from forms. It is the executive's opinion, therefore, that in comparatively small offices, or offices using a limited number of form letters and paragraphs, it is unwise to purchase extremely expensive equipment, because the girls quickly memorize the forms and no longer use the cards.

Another executive who uses "The Automatic Letter Writer" has worked out a simple and inexpensive equipment for his typists. The form paragraphs were clipped from "The Automatic Letter Writer" and pasted on sheets of cardboard about 4 by 5 inches. These boards are bound by rings between covers of pressed board. The covers hold the book solidly if the typist wants to stand it upright, or are equally firm if she prefers to place it on a desk and prop it with a book. Nearly all typists prefer the second method, and the executive has had made a number of simple wire standards for holding the book.

Yellow sheets with no paragraphs mark the main divisions of the forms, and the subjects appear on tabs—orders, complaints, collections, sales and so on. It is easy to open the book to the desired subject.

Paragraphs are pasted on white boards and arranged as follows: openers, fillers, and closers. The principal headings—orders, complaints and so on—are indexed A, B, C, D, E, and the paragraphs are numbered under these letters as follows: 1 to 9, openers; 10 to 39, fillers; and 40 to 50 closers. This series of numbers covers the needs of that particular office.

*This idea
might be
applied in
other ways*

CHAPTER XI

WHAT FORM LETTERS WILL DO FOR YOU

One hundred and fifty orders were secured by mail during a recent form letter campaign conducted by the manufacturer of an installation for supplying water to homes in the country. His product is naturally a rather costly one. These orders were secured entirely by means of an intelligent use of testimonials which were signed by 300 customers.

This is the story of how he did it. Since he tested out the sales possibilities of testimonials on a difficult proposition, his results should be helpful to business men in every line who may be interested in securing effective automatic correspondence.

This manufacturer had already sold about 300 outfits to progressive farmers, but he found that further orders were coming slowly. His canvass was conducted entirely by mail, since his prospects were scattered and because dealers hesitated to take on the proposition on account of the high price.

It was up to him, therefore, to use a direct means of interesting more farmers in his water supply installation. His search for a thorough and economical campaign resulted so successfully that he nearly doubled sales in his own territory at a low cost and used what was left of his advertising appropriation to open up a very profitable new territory.

The entire campaign, as already suggested, was based on form letter testimonials. Pleased users are usually the best sort of advertisement for any article, but it requires tact to use their expressions of satisfaction in a way that will secure additional orders. Displayed too boldly, they may only defeat their purpose. When they are used in the right way, however, they succeed in adding a personal touch to the canvass that is often unusually effective.

*This salesman
draws no salary*

*Making use of
testimonials*

Perhaps a contest like this will help

This particular manufacturer's first problem was: How am I to get the testimonials? Farmers, as a rule, are reluctant to give testimonials; still, he devised a plan that not only secured testimonials, but in addition got the names of more than a thousand live prospects.

His first step was to send out a letter like that below to each customer who had already purchased an outfit. The cash prize of \$50 was large enough to interest the farmers. Then, too, the letter was scheduled so that it reached them during the early winter, when there was little outside work to distract their attention and when they could easily take a few hours off in which to shape up their replies to his letter.

Mr. D. F. Jones
Heatonville, Mo.

Dear Sir:

Arousing his curiosity

This letter will tell you how to win a \$50 cash prize.

Be sure to read it carefully.

You have a . . . Water Supply System in your home, bought from this company some time ago. You have used it long enough to be thoroughly satisfied as to its advantages—or disadvantages, though we have never yet received a single complaint.

By simply telling your experience with the . . . System in your own words; your reasons for buying it instead of other makes; why you can recommend the system to others—you may win the cash prize of \$50.

This often brings in new names

You have to comply with only one condition to be eligible for the cash prize. You must give us the names of five prominent farmers in your locality, whom you would like to have act as judges in this contest. A blank for sending their names is enclosed herewith.

All letters must reach us before January 1, when they will be handed to our printer to be published in an attractive booklet for

MAKING YOUR FORM LETTERS WORK

the perusal of the judges. You also will receive a copy of this booklet.

Prizes like this sometimes help

Be sure to mail your letter without delay. It will give you a good chance to earn \$50 in cash. And don't forget to enclose the blank with the names of the five judges. It is important.

Yours truly,

Almost every person to whom this letter was sent responded with a testimonial—not a brief letter merely saying that the system was satisfactory, but a comprehensive statement telling why this particular water supply system gave satisfaction, why it was to be preferred over others, why it supplied a needed convenience, and similar facts.

What a convincing booklet may do

Every testimonial, of course, was accompanied by the names of five farmers who were to act as judges. When the final count was made on January 1, it was found that 240 testimonials had been received, and with them the names of 1,200 judges.

The manufacturer immediately sent the testimonials to the printer to be published in an attractive little booklet, which had this title on the cover: "A message from the satisfied users of the . . . Water System to those who should be users." A few pages in the front of the booklet related the circumstances and terms of the contest. The remaining pages were given over wholly to testimonials.

A few days in advance of mailing the booklet, a letter was written to the judges to announce its coming and the reason for sending it. There was no effort at any sales appeal to the judges, outside of the testimonials themselves. Almost without exception, the farmers named were pleased to act as judges. This is the letter that was sent to them in advance of the booklet:

How to build good will indirectly

One of your neighbors, who is competing for a \$50 cash prize, has asked us to have you act as judge in this contest. This shows the high esteem in which you are held by your neighbors.

The prize of \$50 will be given to the writer of the testimonial that is selected

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Could \$50 have been better invested?

by the majority of judges as the clearest, most comprehensive and interesting statement of the writer's experience with the . . . Water Supply System.

The testimonials are being printed in an attractive little booklet which will be sent to you in a few days. Each letter is numbered. Just put down the number of your "Blue Ribbon" letter in the blank furnished for this purpose, and use the stamped envelop for returning it. Please have your answer mailed before February 1.

Does your advertising reach live prospects?

The success of this contest depends upon your cooperation, and we trust you will do us the favor asked in the preceding paragraph. You may be assured that we shall try to return it some day.

Thank you!

The result of having these likely prospects read testimonial letters from 240 enthusiastic users of the water supply system can be imagined. They did not merely skim the pages. They read each letter carefully in order to be sure to select the most deserving candidate for the \$50 prize.

The letters were splendid testimonials. Some of them mentioned advantages resulting from the system that the manufacturer himself had never known about. In fact, he secured more valuable talking points from this contest than he could probably have secured in any other way. In the booklet itself, each testimonial was numbered. Everything possible was done to make it easy for the judges to indicate their preferences. A blank was furnished for this purpose and also a stamped envelop.

When all the judges' letters were in, a summary was made. The prize of \$50, of course, went to the writer of the letter receiving the largest number of votes. A letter was then sent to the judges. It named the prize winner and thanked them for going over the letters carefully.

Up to this point, the manufacturer's chief aim had been to center the interest of the judges on the contest and the prize. Nothing had been said to them directly about their buying the system. Their minds, however,

This plan tells how it was done

were by this time colored by an appreciation of its advantages, for they had read the enthusiastic testimonials of 240 satisfied users.

So now, after the contest had come to a close, and the judges had again read over the prize-winning letter, they were naturally in the proper frame of mind to be approached with the idea of owning one of the installations themselves. It was up to the manufacturer to turn this advantage into a desire to buy.

Soon after the short letter announcing the winner of the prize had been sent out, each judge received the following letter:

Did your favorite receive the \$50 cash prize?

If he didn't, he certainly came close to it. It was a hard race; every one of the letters was really highly eligible for the prize, because every one of them told in terms of actual experience why the . . . Water Supply System is a blessing to any home, and every one told this story well.

After reading all these enthusiastic letters from people who are using the system in their homes, we feel sure that you have often said to yourself, or to your wife: "Wouldn't it be nice if we had one of these systems in our home?" And it certainly would be nice, let me assure you.

Think of having running water in the kitchen, in the basement, in the bath room, just WHEN you want it and WHERE you want it; no pumping, no heavy pails to carry—just a turn of the faucet, that's all. It makes farm life worth living.

We suggest that you run over to Mr. Jefferson's place and take a look at his system. It will be mighty interesting and we feel sure that Mr. Jefferson will be very glad to explain everything to you. Better do this as soon as you can get away for an afternoon.

How indifferent readers were converted into live prospects

Following up at the right time

Getting the prospect to see your side

Making sales-men out of your customers

This letter had a helpful personal touch, because it referred to the man who owned a system in the immediate neighborhood. The owners, as a rule, took great pains to show carefully their installations to visitors, and fully substantiated their written testimony about them. And they really knew even more about the installation than they did when they wrote their contributions to the booklet, because they had had an opportunity to read testimonials from 239 other users.

Two weeks later this letter was mailed to each one of the judges:

How to appeal to the home pride

After visiting the home of Mr. Jefferson, hasn't it often occurred to you that a . . . System would be just the thing for your own home?

You can afford it as well as Mr. Jefferson, I believe. Besides, it is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of farm life. Think how much it will mean to your wife to have running water just when it is wanted, and where it is wanted. No more hard pumping, no more heavy pails to carry, no need whatever of going out into the cold, the wet, and the snow.

This was used as a sales argument

You owe it to your wife and yourself to install one of these water supply systems in your home. It will not only make your whole home life on the farm truly worth living, but it will also give you much more time to really enjoy it thoroughly and to your heart's content.

We enclose a postal. Return it to us promptly, and we will immediately get busy drawing up specifications and estimating the cost, all without any obligations on your part whatsoever.

Mail this card the first thing tomorrow morning, SURE.

The net result of this campaign, as mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter was to sell—at a very reasonable sales cost—150 complete outfits.

Here is an explanation of this campaign's success: It was very carefully planned; every factor was taken into consideration; the prospects scarcely knew they were prospects until they had convinced themselves that they really wanted the proposition.

Let us take up some of the interesting as well as profitable methods and form letters that have been unusually successful in building good will.

A big mail-order house, known from one end of the country to the other, is equally certain of the value of form letters of a personal turn. No occasion is too insignificant not to warrant a letter, provided a letter will put a possible or actual customer in a better frame of mind toward this big concern. Witness the case of a letter mailed to one customer not long ago: merely one instance among hundreds.

This customer had received, in one of his shipments from this mail-order house, the order and bill of some other customer. He mailed it back, expecting no reply. But here is the courteous form letter they wrote to him immediately:

Thanks for sending back the order and bills which were packed with your goods by mistake.

Because they were mixed up with your goods, we could not tell what to do with the articles called for on that order. But by your sending them back to us promptly, we are able to send the goods along to the rightful owner so that he will not be disappointed for Christmas.

It was a small matter. The customer had no idea that he would receive a letter. But this note in appreciation of his courtesy confirmed his belief in the concern's thoughtfulness, and he showed it to at least one of his friends—who was not a mail-order buyer—as a sample of this particular firm's methods of building and holding good will.

In New York there is a wholesaler who is also firmly convinced that it pays to send form letters to his dealers whenever it is possible for him to do so. He became a convert after an experience he had while following his

Why the campaign was successful

Errors are sometimes unavoidable—

—but they can often be capitalized

*This man
wanted to know
“why”*

chief hobby. This hobby consists in trying to find out why customers purchase from him, rather than from competitors. He reasons that if he finds the “why” back of an order, he can use similar tactics for bigger orders or with other prospects.

One day a customer entered the house, and, after looking over the stock carefully, placed an order that figured up to about \$1,500. This is twice as large as the average order in the wholesaler's line of business, and it was more than three times the size of orders the house had previously received from this particular customer.

News of the transaction soon reached the wholesaler himself, and he was sufficiently interested to make a personal investigation. He ran over the items with the house salesman and engaged the customer in conversation on a chance that the reasons behind the order might crop out. It was a slow process. The customer spoke in high terms of the salesman who covered his territory, but he hinted at nothing the latter had done to win undivided favor. Finally, however, the secret was out:

“Where is Joe Chandler?” the customer asked. Chandler was the sales manager.

“Over in Michigan, taking a few days' rest,” the wholesaler replied.

“I was wondering about him. One of the men downstairs said he was out of town. I wanted to give him this order.”

“Yes?”

“Yes! You see, I had to go to the hospital recently. I spent nearly a month there before I was in shape to get back in the store. Joe wrote me a letter. Said he heard I was sick. I wrote back, and, before I left, I had half a dozen letters from him.”

“I see,” the wholesaler replied, “and what made Joe bother you up there?”

“Bother! Why, thunder, it was no bother. I was lonesome as an owl, and, outside of my family, Joe was the only person that paid any attention to me.”

“What did he write about?”

“Nothing in particular—nice, friendly letters; not business; just a word or two about folks we both knew, and things that were happening around town. I wanted to give Joe the order to show him how much I really appreciated his thoughtfulness.”

*Here's what he
found!*

*A little friendly
interest got the
order*

The wholesaler is now an earnest convert to letter writing and has many effective paragraphs prepared that help greatly in building and holding good will. His sales manager had spoken repeatedly about his ideas on this subject, and he knew that more letters were being written than ever before under any other sales manager. Until this incident occurred, he had not realized all the "workings" of the plan, and the sales power behind it.

Do your letters express your personality?

Chandler, the sales manager, has his own ideas about sales letters. Therefore, he seldom dictates in the old-fashioned, red-pepper, "ginger-up" style. That is probably because he is inclined to be a quiet sort of fellow—not that he fails to see the value of the other type of letter if the man who writes it happens to be built that way. He writes every time an opportunity offers, and his letters have the knack of keeping a lot of dealers in a friendly attitude toward the firm.

After his experience with the effectiveness of Chandler's letters, the wholesaler ran through the files to find out more about them. What he found resulted in the official recognition of form but personal-sounding letters as an important part of his general sales campaign.

Where the news came from

Now a stenographer makes it her business to collect all the news she can find about his customers. She reads the trade papers. Salesmen bring her little, significant facts which they occasionally happen to run across. Not only customers, but prospects as well, come within the range of her efforts.

The purpose of it all is to get the material for form letters which will really be read gladly.

The danger in such a plan as this—in fact, in any form-letter plan—is that the letters will not be personal-sounding enough. That sounds perhaps like a paradox; but it really is not.

One way to get the personal touch

Personal letters can be the most impersonal of all, if the wrong people write them. If you are the right person to dictate letters and form paragraphs you have in your make-up a bit of imagination. It helps you to see the fellow who is to read your letter. You have just enough ability in the way of letting your thoughts and feelings flow out in words—that is, the ability to express yourself. Not too much of this quality, or you may talk too freely about the beauties of nature, when you really want prospects to buy beans.

*Letterheads
sometimes turn
the trick*

The qualities you have most strongly of all, however, if you write good letters, are sincerity and enthusiasm. These two fundamental qualities will usually enable any man to write form letters that get the business, even if he does not happen to know the grammatical error involved in "they was."

Genuine friendliness declares itself at once. Just outside Boston is a farmer who raises good things to eat, which he markets direct to consumers. He sells by mail. In selecting a letterhead, he has taken care to get one that of itself almost makes you think of big, old-fashioned, farm-house dinners. And then all his form letters proceed to carry out this suggestion of fresh, good things to eat.

The following letter recently went to some of the friends on his prospect list in time to catch them for their Christmas buying:

Would you like to try a soft-roasting capon, weighing anywhere from 6 to 12 pounds, for your Christmas dinner?

I have for my private family trade a flock of Light Brahma capons, which are about the softest and largest roasting capons on the market. They are nearly six months old, and will be just ripe for the Christmas dinner.

By my auto delivery I can bring them direct from the farm to your door in an hour. They will be picked, dressed, and drawn, ready for roasting; you can have any weight you may select between 6 and 12 pounds.

Capon are better than turkeys, I think, and the Light Brahmans in particular make the best roasting fowl I know. Try one and see for yourself.

I can deliver these at your door for the Christmas and New Year's dinner WHILE THEY LAST for 35 cents a pound. Owing to the limited size of my flock, I can guarantee to fill only the earliest orders.

*This letter com-
bines sincerity
and enthusiasm*

Please use the enclosed postcard, or telephone your order to me—Newton 109.

Why this letter paid

A letter like this is honestly friendly. Largely for that reason, and also because the writer knows how to describe his product in an appetizing way, it inspires the confidence its writer aims to arouse.

In these days we have to plow deeper to get business than men did a generation or so back. They burned business stumps, sowed seed, and harvested a good crop. We are finding it increasingly necessary to use fertilizer—in the form of intensive sales methods, and the right kind of a form letter is, of course, an exceptionally good business-getting method.

Now, let us take up some methods in letter writing that have made difficult collections, and without offending customers.

"During the months of October and November we found that collections were larger than ever before in the history of our company," says the sales manager who tells his experiences below. During the year in question his organization collected 24,000 accounts ranging in amount from \$10 to \$5,000 and resorted to legal aid but 23 times; this, in spite of the fact that the country was then supposed to be unusually hampered by international complications.

No depressing periods in this collection department

The success of those two months was not extremely unusual, for we regularly follow a policy of close collections, and it has been the means of educating our customers to the habit of promptness. When a bill becomes due, we expect the debtor to pay it. This policy is never altered unless some dispute arises, which justifies the debtor in holding up payment. As a result, a customer who has purchased goods from us knows what we expect; and few customers hesitate to comply with our requirements. Probably other managers will be interested in the methods and actual letters that produced these satisfactory results.

Educating customers to pay promptly

My aim, in preparing form letters to debtors, is always to convey the idea that I am master of the situation. I approach the debtor firmly, yet courteously. Before I decide on a letter, I convince myself that it is going to bring the money. Therefore my letter never

*This man
believes his
policy pays
him*

*Holding the
debtor to the
terms*

*Should dis-
count dates be
rigidly adhered
to?*

wavers nor permits the debtor to read doubt of my intention between the lines.

I never beg for payment. I eliminate such phrases as "if convenient," "we shall appreciate," "will you," "can you not." They are weak, and suggest to the debtor that he may, if he wishes, have more time; they give him an opportunity to put you off. Moreover, I never suggest an excuse for my asking the debtor to pay promptly, other than the fact that the order which he signed gave him just so long to arrange for payment. Excuses employed by some collection men—like the old one, "we are in need of funds"—are seldom effective. Yet, all through my correspondence, I try to manifest the utmost fairness.

The "we" element is eliminated as far as possible. Wherever it is possible to do so, another word is used, or it is left out. The "you" element predominates in every case.

I insist on having my letters neatly typewritten. They must be free from erasures. Punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing must be perfect. No abbreviations are allowed. The typewriting must be "blocked" in the center of the letterhead as perfectly as the stenographer can estimate; the right-hand margin must not be any more ragged than can be helped.

Every direct demand for payment must show the date of shipment or the due date, what the order covers, amount of the account and any credits against it. The debtor thus has all the information and figures before him, and these can be checked against his records and books in case he may have mislaid or lost the original invoice and statement. And there is no reason why the slow-pay should spar for time by writing back for any of this information.

Many customers will take off the 2% discount, regardless of the fact that the time limit may have expired by several days; and some will deduct the amount even though the account has reached maturity. This I never allow, unless the debtor, when remitting, presents a reasonable excuse for so doing; or unless the firm is large and I know they pass their bills for payment on a certain date each month.

My form letter to the man who takes the discount after the time expires is as follows:

Thank you very kindly for your check in the amount of \$137.20, which we have applied against your account of \$140.

This man insists on an explanation

Your attention, however, is called to the fact that you have taken off the 2% discount, although the 10 days' time in which you were allowed to do so has expired by 20 days.

Probably this was an oversight on your part. If so, you will, of course, mail this small difference at once. Or did you purposely take this discount, feeling justified in doing so for some particular reason? If so, you will undoubtedly be glad and willing to let us know the circumstances.

Let us give you the conditions we face: We have thousands of customers who pay their bills within the 10 days, simply to take advantage of this discount. You will appreciate that we would be doing them a great injustice by compelling them to pay within the time limit, while we allowed you to settle at maturity and still take off the discount.

Appealing to a customer's sense of fairness

Then, too, you probably know that a manufacturing concern depends for raw material upon the money received from its outstanding accounts. And when we are paid promptly, we can purchase these raw materials in bulk quantities, thus getting the benefit of a large discount and in addition a 2% discount. This means to us the saving of a considerable amount of money yearly. So, to encourage our customers to pay promptly, and place the money in our hands to use, we give them a 2% discount when they pay within 10 days from the date of the invoice.

This argument often gets the cash

In view of these facts, unless you feel you have a good reason for taking off the

Sometimes this works—sometimes not

discount, we feel confident that your check for the difference will be received promptly.

Results obtained with this letter have been very satisfactory. Still, there is an occasional customer who will seemingly ignore it. In such cases, I follow up the letter with a reminder in 10 days.

If this does not get results, I usually drop the matter. The amount is so small that it is a very delicate matter to wrangle over.

He is written a final letter, though, in which I state that because the amount is so small we have decided to allow it this time; but he must bear in mind that in future dealings we shall require him to remit within the specified time if he wants to take advantage of the discount.

As a result we have no difficulty of this sort with customers who have once purchased goods from us. They understand what we expect of them and they are careful to live up to our regulations.

My first letter, following 10 days after I have sent the statements to customers who have not remitted, reads like this:

Your attention is respectfully directed to our invoice of July 10, for \$49.80, covering 300 pounds Concrete Churn, statement of which was sent you a few days ago.

By referring to the original invoice, you will see that, according to the terms, the account became due on August 10.

You will, therefore, kindly let us have your check by return mail.

You will notice that the first paragraph gives all the information about the account, and without definitely saying so reminds the debtor gently that this is a second request for payment.

The second paragraph gives the due date, from which he quickly notes it is overdue, and how long overdue. It assumes the attitude, and subtly conveys it to the customer, without saying so in words, that, inasmuch as we have not written to the contrary, there is no reason why payment should not be made promptly.

Why this letter pays

The third paragraph conveys the idea that there is no doubt, in our minds, but that the return mail will bring the check. We indicate no hesitation or doubt.

This letter brought in checks

The letter is courteous and firm. In it we have not begged for payment; we show that we expect it. The entire letter is predominated by the "will you" element; the "we" element is left out.

A record of the results obtained with this letter shows that out of 100 mailed, 78 brought checks; four, requests for short extensions; and one brought a request for an adjustment of a complaint.

When a debtor writes me in a straightforward manner requesting an extension of time on his account, I always grant it: provided the requested extension is not too long, provided it is the customer's first request on that particular account, and provided also my past experience with him has not taught me that he has a habit of making such requests.

If, however, the length of time requested seems unreasonable, I shorten it; if it is the debtor's second request, I usually grant it, but explain to him frankly that he cannot consistently expect further favors for the same reason; and in cases where he shows signs of developing the habit of asking for extensions, I write him at length, explaining that he should and must hereafter arrange to meet his bills more promptly to insure our continued confidence in him.

Suiting the rules to individual cases

In cases, though, where the account is large, and an extension of more than two weeks is asked, I generally request a reasonable part payment by return mail and allow an extension on the balance.

In granting these extensions, I never grant "a short time" or "a few days." Always, I require a definite payment date; and if the customer does not mention one in his letter I fix it for him. On these occasions, I write this letter:

Perhaps this is the best way to handle it

I refer to your letter of the
requesting a few days' extension on your
account of

It is a pleasure reasonably to accommodate you in this instance, and we shall, therefore, grant you until Monday, October On this date, then, at the latest,

*One way in
which your
bank can help*

your check in full payment is expected
in our office.

On short extensions of time, if the remittance is not received on the specified date, I write politely but forcefully. If reasons justify my granting a somewhat longer extension, I usually am careful to remind the debtor a day or so in advance.

Frequently I resort to drafts. By employing the aid of a bank official to present my account for collection, I gain formality and weight.

I never, however, draw upon a customer without first having given him 10 days' notice. My second letter reads as follows:

*This letter
brought good
results*

With additional reference to the payment of our invoice of July 10, covering 300 pounds Concrete Churn—\$49.80—which became due on August 10: Unless we have received your check within the next 10 days, or have heard from you with objections, we shall assume it is satisfactory to you to have us draw for the amount now overdue and act accordingly.

Your remittance direct, however, is much preferred, and we earnestly urge that you send check by return mail.

Twenty of these letters brought 13 checks and two requests not to draw drafts.

At the expiration of 10 days, if payment is not forthcoming, or if a satisfactory explanation has not been given, a draft is drawn.

On small amounts, drafts are made payable on sight; on large ones, a few days of grace are given. After the draft is deposited in the bank for collection, I keep just as close watch on the account as before, because I have learned that some banks will favor debtors by holding drafts drawn against them several days. If payment is not made, or the draft is not returned dishonored at the expiration of eight days from the date of presentation, I trace it through the bank, and at the same time make a more urgent demand.

When a draft is drawn upon a debtor and returned dishonored, or in instances where I do not make a draft

*How one man
checks up
drafts*

MAKING YOUR FORM LETTERS WORK

and my second demand brings no response, I write what I term my "put-up-to-'em" letter. This reads about as follows:

*Putting it up to
the customer*

The First National Bank has returned to us dishonored and marked "no attention" our draft for \$49.80, drawn upon you a few days ago, covering your indebtedness for 300 pounds Concrete Churn--shipped July 10.

This is our fourth request for a settlement of our account: three of which apparently have been ignored. You are certainly not justified in treating us in this manner; if you have what you deem a reasonable excuse for holding up payment, we are entitled to know what it is; if not, a check should have been sent before this date.

*Letters that win
good will*

Your explanation or check, therefore, will be looked for positively in the return mail.

This is putting the matter squarely up to the debtor; and, to my mind, there is absolutely no excuse for his not answering. Twenty-five letters like this one obtained 23 answers—17 of which contained checks.

If the fault is not ours, I do not so inform him in a short and sharp answer and consider the matter settled. I try to help him find where the trouble does lie, and straighten out his difficulty. This costs me very little, and I find it wins the lasting friendship of customers.

If the complaint is due to a misunderstanding upon the part of the customer, I try to point it out to him in a courteous letter—usually a long one—always endeavoring to word it so that there will be no arousing of antagonism. If, however, the customer has a real grievance, I first ask him what he feels we should do to make matters right. Most men have a sense of reasonableness in them, and if they see we are willing to listen to their side of the story they will be fair.

*Getting at the
root of the
trouble*

If a customer's proposition is what I consider more than he should ask of us, I meet him in it as far as I consider consistent with squareness all round and try

*Points to
remember in
handling com-
plaints*

*This letter
brought in
the cash*

*What form
letters did for
one man*

to make him see our side of the story. The average man can and will recognize a fair proposition. And experience has taught me that if we do not attempt to force him by argument into our way of thinking, but offer him instead a fair compromise and ask him to consider it, he will almost always end up by coming to see things as we wish him to.

In adjusting complaints, I handle them just as quickly as possible, so as not to have the account held up indefinitely. As soon as matters are straightened out, I ask for the money in the usual way.

If my "put-up-to-'em" letter does not bring results, the next step I take is to threaten suit. My letter is about as follows:

If within the next 10 days you do not send us your check for \$49.80, in payment of our invoice of July 10, covering 300 pounds Concrete Churn, or explain why you have held up payment, we shall feel compelled to hand the account to our attorneys.

We shall regret having any trouble, but you must admit that when you fail to meet your obligations, or explain why, we are justified in taking measures to force a different attitude upon you.

Will YOU do what you should to avoid a lawsuit?

This letter, too, has proved very effective. 24 letters like it brought 17 checks in full payment of account; 4, checks in part payment; and 3, explanations or excuses for holding up payment and requests for short extensions. Every letter was answered; not one debtor was offended. When I state that during one year out of 24,000 accounts, ranging in amount from \$10 to \$5,000, I have resorted to legal aid but 23 times, the form letters speak for themselves.

If, however, this last letter brings no check and no response at the expiration of the 10 days, the account goes promptly into the attorney's hands. I never threaten to do a thing, in handling collections, without backing my threat with action, and promptly.

CHAPTER XV

OPENERS AND CLOSERS THAT MAKE YOUR FORM LETTERS PERSONAL

Get your prospect's attention and interest right at the start. This is an old and tested rule of letter writing, and many men who sell goods by mail find if they can write a first paragraph that will interest prospects and make them read the rest of the letter, they will, in a large number of instances, escape the waste basket.

I have always been interested in sales letters, because I have to write a lot of them—I am manager of a mercantile agency—and I have given this question of first paragraphs considerable study. Every interesting letter that comes to my office goes into a special file. Two or three times a month I run through the letters I have collected and pick out the ones that seem worth keeping.

In this way I have secured a permanent collection that I value highly. When I need an idea I go to my file of good letters, and often get a valuable suggestion that I can use in the letter I am planning. In order to pass a good thing along, I am giving here some of the best "openers" in these letters from my collection.

This letter will be a very short one. As it will be about money matters, it should be doubly interesting.

Yes, this is a form letter, but it is decidedly worth the 30 seconds it will take you to read it!

Can you put your finger on just the record you want instantly?

*Why these
letters get
attention*

*Where this
man gets his
ideas*

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*These
"openers"
might work
for you*

Going! Going!—Soon 'twill be GONE!

Your last chance to buy space in the February "Farmer" at the \$500 rate.

The shorter the act, the longer the encore.

The shorter the letter, the more readers it will have, and, as we assume that you, in common with ourselves, have your favorite authors, this letter will be short and right to the point, and we candidly believe it will pay you to read every word of it.

*This could be
applied in
other ways*

This is letter number three.

We did not number our previous letters because we did not believe we would need to write subsequent letters.

A concern making farm implements, which mails millions of sales letters each year, begins one of its most effective letters in this way:

You can't do so very much with 2 cents nowadays, especially in some directions. In these times of excessively high prices it wouldn't buy much food, but 2 cents spent in a certain way will do more than you realize.

*Why these
letters pulled*

Two unusually successful letters, used to sell filing equipment, started out like this:

If you saw an employee throwing 50-cent pieces out of the window, you would be "jarred," to say the least.

When you want a letter, an order, an invoice, or any office record, you want it QUICK.

It may mean \$1,000, some day, to be able to find instantly Brown's quotation, Smith's

order, or the copy of Jones' letter, for on this particular record may hinge an important decision.

Gaining attention at the start

A firm of letter specialists began one of their letters in this interesting way:

An enterprising corner grocer once filled a quart jar with beans, placed it in his window, and offered \$5 to the person who guessed nearest to the number of beans it contained.

Many widely differing guesses were registered. But one man bought some beans, carried them home, filled a quart jar and proceeded to count them. He got the \$5.

Sometimes frankness gains confidence

The first letter sent out by an unusually successful concern which sells by mail a time- and labor-saving office device, starts out with this extremely frank confession:

Your name was purchased by us along with 2,000 other names and addresses.

The same firm opens one of its follow-up letters with a cleverly related anecdote:

The night Lincoln was nominated for the presidency, his wife locked him out. After Mr. Lincoln had knocked repeatedly, Mrs. Lincoln called out, "What have you been doing 'traipsing' around till this hour of the night?"

Nearly everyone would read this letter

"My dear," said Mr. Lincoln, "I have just been nominated for President of the United States."

"Abe," was Mrs. Lincoln's reply, "I thought you were drinking before; now I know it."

Two letters that helped business for a laundry started out like this:

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

You can often work this angle to advantage

Did you ever stop to think what an important part your collar plays in the sum total of your appearance?

Figure it out for yourself!

If the washerwoman comes once a week—your home is hers for 52 days a year.

This “opener,” from a correspondence school, catches hold of your interest at once:

Have you ever been haunted by a book?

Here's an interesting opening

Have you ever begun a story and allowed yourself to be completely concentrated upon it, only to be interrupted, to lose the book, and to go all the rest of the day and the following days with that story and those characters drifting tauntingly in and out of your thoughts, giving you that unsatisfied feeling of something ended too abruptly?

The ideal “opener” makes it hard to stop reading. A real estate dealer started one of his letters this way:

What would you do in a case like this?—

Letters that “hold” your interest

A widow owns a property—to be exact, two apartment houses—rented out to 12 families. A tenant renting one of the flats and paying regularly suddenly fell behind in his rent. Ten weeks went by, and no money was forthcoming. The owner did not want to turn the tenant out, for that would mean a certain loss; neither did she want to risk losing more money.

This “opener,” in a letter from a man with overcoats to sell proved timely:

You will wake up some brisk morning before long, shivering—for the frost king is on hand with advance information that winter will arrive here on schedule time, if not a little earlier than usual.

A fish and poultry market man almost made his prospects "taste" his delicious fish with this "opener":

Creating a desire for your product

A salt mackerel, freshened to your taste, broiled to a rich brown and served with the juice dripping from it, with melted butter, is a breakfast dish that will almost melt in your mouth.

A department store superintendent used this "opener" to good advantage in a shoe letter:

There's a cheery little pair of Challis walking boots waiting for you at the dealer's--made for YOU to YOUR taste and YOUR style--just the thing to wear with that smart, new trotteur gown you've had sent home.

Probably most customers would act on this

This "opener" is clever. A purely clever opening is sometimes dangerous, but this one succeeds because of the fact that it often gets a laugh:

When I was a boy working my way through school, I never spoke of One Dollar "Bill." With me it was always One Dollar "William," because I wasn't on good enough terms with One Dollar to feel free to call him "Bill."

The following are the opening paragraphs of three letters used by a health specialist:

Similar openings often win sympathy

I don't dare tell you the full truth—you would not believe it. I wouldn't either a few years ago; but I tried my plan on myself first—here is what it did for me.

After playing bridge the other night someone at the table started doing card tricks. You know what a bore they are. So pretty soon I said, "I can do a trick worth all of those"; and, taking a pack of cards, I tore them in two.

Soon after 7 every morning I get to my desk; at noon go across the street for a

*"Openers" that
pave the way*

hurried lunch; along toward 6 o'clock I quit work, not because I am tired, but because I'm hungry—I am NEVER tired:

Put yourself in the frame of mind of a consumer who has used a coupon attached to an advertisement that appears frequently in publications with national circulations, read the two paragraphs that follow, and then decide for yourself if they have the right ring. Keep in mind, as you pass judgment, that the paragraphs belong in a form letter signed with the name of the president of the concern back of the national advertising:

*Do these para-
graphs ring
true to you?*

Checking over my personal letter file today I was reminded that I haven't received an answer from you to my letter of recent date.

Nor do I seem to be able to locate your order for "Western Pumps" in the order department.

These two paragraphs come from a letter actually used in a real sales letter campaign that follows up national advertising which costs money, although I have disguised the name of the product, and will do likewise in quoting from the other letters which I have in mind. The paragraphs quoted above start the second letter I received after mailing in a coupon embodied in an advertisement issued by a concern located in California.

*Here's some-
thing to watch
for*

When I used the coupon I think I was what you would call "a live prospect"; after I read these two paragraphs I am quite sure that I changed into a "dead prospect." I have no doubt but that the California firm watches its orders carefully. Still, I do not believe that the president of the organization himself records in his "personal letter file" every form letter mailed.

I do not believe he spends his time checking up with his order department every name to which his mailing department sends a form letter. And I do not think that many other consumers would be apt to believe anything of the sort, either.

The fact that I could not agree with the two paragraphs turned my attention from the California concern's product. Under other circumstances, I would have ordered. My interest could have been easily held up

by a paragraph which made the most of the fact that orders were being watched carefully by the sales manager on the Pacific Coast, but which did not attempt to convince me that the president had taken an unexplainable interest in landing my order himself.

Exaggeration is seldom advisable

I may be too finicky; still the impression the ultimate consumer gets from a sales letter is the impression which counts. The letter that makes the biggest hit around the home office may not ring right to the prospect—sometimes the home office has been studying the letter so long that it cannot take a fresh viewpoint quickly. A paragraph like this, for example, would not have damped my interest in the offers of the California concern:

This is undoubtedly true

We are watching our April mailings carefully. There is no record of an order from you.

The next letter from this firm also carried the name of the president. It again assured me of that official's interest in my order by declaring:

You'll recall that I had the pleasure, a few weeks ago, of answering your inquiry for a detailed description of my new 1915 French Model Washer Western Pumps—personally.

I am sure that if the one word "personally" had been omitted, this letter would have come nearer to the right ring—at least if I typify the average consumer.

When not to use the "personal" tone

I received only one more letter from the California organization. It was based on the "plot idea," which is apparently rapidly making good with writers of sales letters. A live plot certainly does make a letter interesting—providing the plot takes full advantage of the situation it describes and has the right ring.

The man who can tell how a plot will strike the average consumer is exceedingly rare. I am afraid the writer of the California concern's letter is not one of them. He used a sound enough plot—Will Preble, the "stockkeeper in charge," while taking stock, had discovered 300 "shop-worn" Western Pumps. It had then been decided to offer the whole 300 at 40% off the usual list prices.

*Using the
"plot idea"
effectively*

So Will Preble wrote a note to the president of the concern. He mentioned a Mr. Spaulding, evidently an executive of some importance. I know all about these little details because the writer of the third letter in this follow-up series enclosed a copy of Will Preble's note. Here's the way it read:

Mr. S. R. Stanwood:

Mr. Spaulding told me to report to you how many sample pumps we have on hand that are shop-worn. Here is the list:

(Signed) WILL PREBLE
Stockkeeper in Charge

*It's the little
things that
count*

Mr. Preble's note listed about 300 pumps divided among 16 different sizes. It also gave the list prices reduced 40% and mentioned the resulting savings for each size. The plot took care of the figures, however, for the following note appeared at the end of Mr. Preble's memorandum:

We added the figures to the stockkeeper's report so as to show you instantly just how much you could save by taking advantage of this opportune offer.

So far, so good. It is always interesting to look behind the scenes, and Mr. Preble's note to his boss served its purpose. It rang soundly enough to me to hold my interest in the letter's plot, although it did occur to me that 16 sizes was a fairly wide range for samples.

I also noticed that the particular size for which I had inquired was not listed, despite the fact that the first letter—the one in which the president was pictured as reaching in his "personal letter file" for my order—had, by means of a fill-in, specifically mentioned my size.

However, the right ring with which this plot started off did not last through the first three paragraphs of the letter that accompanied Mr. Preble's list. The third and fourth paragraphs of this letter read:

Therefore, right now, at the very opening of the pumping season, we are going to mail 1,000 letters, to 1,000 different people, in 1,000 different cities, offering these

*Letters that
defeat their own
purpose*

pumps at the almost unheard-of discount of 40% off the list price.

It pays to watch for inconsistencies

The information sheets have all been numbered and indexed. The index cards will be destroyed May 31. Fill out and mail the information sheet today if you want any of these sample pumps at 40% off the list price.

I recalled that the plot provided only 1,000 letters for selling 300 pumps. I found on inspection that the "information sheet" was, as a matter of fact, an order. The "3" in the phrase "May 31" had been filled in with pen and ink. I knew that there are less than 1,000 American communities over the 10,000 mark, so the statement that the letter had gone to "1,000 different cities" set me to thinking. It struck me as very unusual, to say the least, that I was supposed to be the only consumer in the largest of American cities to receive a copy of this form letter.

Why this plot failed

Now, this plot appealed to me, taken by and large. But even if the second letter had not drowned my interest in the proposition, the details which surrounded the plot would have done so very quickly. I have no doubt but that Mr. Preble's stockkeeping might result in the discovery of 300 samples; but the other particulars of the offer failed—at least in my case—to take complete advantage of this fairly obvious situation. They did not ring right to me.

Why could not the phrase "1,000 different cities" have been spared? Were the details about indexing and numbering necessary? Why had pen and ink been used to write in the "3"? Just a few minor changes to clear up these points, and this third letter would have made the most of its plot, I think.

A case of "too much information"

The three paragraphs following are taken from another follow-up series that was used in connection with national advertising:

You're lucky—there is a special treat in store for you.

I have just returned to my office from an inspection of the factory, where, in rummaging around, I found a salesman's trunk

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

If handled right, this idea usually works

containing 15 cases, ranging in all the standard sizes.

These cases are slightly soiled from handling, but they are new and have never been used, and—well, you are in business, and it is needless for me to say that in building these cases for samples, they were naturally made by our skilled mechanics, and the material used in their construction was especially selected.

Here's a lack of consistency

This was a good-enough plot, too—though, because of its elaborateness, I did not like it as well as the one used by the man in California. I was willing to accept it as reasonable, though—until it occurred to me that this particular product is made in over 15 standard sizes. I could not agree that a sales manager would send out a form letter to a national list when he had barely one article in each size. Then I noticed the insinuation that samples are used for the purpose of misguiding the prospect under normal circumstances. Next I ended by losing whatever interest I may have had before in the proposition.

Another lost opportunity

The most could have been made of this plot very easily, I think. A moment's calculation would probably have related the stock to the range of sizes. Then the statement about samples might have been handled with a better understanding of actual American business methods. This letter—really taken from one of the letters used by the California concern previously mentioned—is an example:

These goods are samples, made with all the care and attention to detail always given samples.

If the paragraphs quoted from the first letter from this second concern did not ring right to me, a stronger expression is needed to describe the effect of these—from the next letter:

This book explains how we have virtually stolen all the best features of products similar to ours, and put them together, making a case that is so nearly rustproof

PROVED METHODS THAT PAY

that we would be doing ourselves an injury if we called them anything but rustproof cases.

This seems a matter of opinion

Now fill out the information sheet and put it in the mail, before you lay this aside, because this offer will be made to someone else in your neighborhood if we do not hear from you soon.

This letter would have had a better ring, as far as I am concerned, if the first of these paragraphs had been omitted entirely and the second one changed perhaps to read something like—

Letters that kill sales

Now fill out the information sheet and put it in the mail, before you lay this aside, because this offer is limited and may never be made again.

Although my interest in this proposition had been killed already, I glanced over a third letter that came. It did not have a healthier ring to me than the others because of these paragraphs:

You have been overlooked. In writing you recently I neglected to send you the enclosed sample of linen.

Don't forget to address your reply to my personal attention, so I can see that the special discount goes through all O. K.

The sample interested me a lot, but I laughed at a form letter written to cover the omission of an important enclosure. I was not willing to slight the sales manager whose name appeared on this letter by accepting the letter's assertion that he gave his personal attention to the details connected with handling orders.

You'll admit this is far-fetched

In my case, this letter would have had a better ring without the references to the omission of the sample and the sales manager's personal interest in the handling of the order. A request to try and tear the sample would have interested me as an "opener."

Here is how one concern actually gets attention for its sample and still manages to avoid giving its letter any hint of an unsound ring:

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

Many prospects would be interested in this

I wrote you yesterday, but as you have probably not had time to answer my letter I am sending you samples of two different makes of nuts which I would like to have you examine.

Samples usually speak for themselves

There are two styles, one with a split and the other with a tubular stem. If you will test these nuts with a file or hammer you will find that the nut with the split stem can be cut away or dented quite easily, while the one with the tubular stem is "diamond hard." You will find it so hard that you can't even scratch it with a file.

The nut with the split stem has been universally used by manufacturers in this country, as well as in Europe, and has always given very good satisfaction, but within the past six months we have found by experiments in our testing plant and in actual service on paved streets and country roads, that the nut with the tubular stem will stand nearly twice as much wear.

Here's a weak spot

The second letter used in connection with the follow-up for a third advertisement to which I replied also referred to a "mistake." This time the name of the manager of the concern signed the letter—and it was explained that he had neglected to specify the expiration of a "special offer." This situation was combined with an elaborate plot involving the practicability of two different types of rivets.

Samples of the rivets were enclosed. They interested me and I tested them with a knife. But the "mistake" about the expiration date did not have the right ring. Then I noticed that only 25 people in America were supposed to have received the "special offer"—still a form letter had been used to announce it. It was also stated that all but six of the 25 had purchased. So this second elaborated form letter was supposedly written for six prospects—six prospects and no more. The plot had a good background—but the most had not been made of it, in my opinion. I found my interest in the proposition

dwindling—finally it ceased absolutely. I never ordered. Here are the paragraphs in this letter that did not ring true to me:

Be sure your letters ring true

When I wrote you recently making the special offer to build up for you a pair or full set of Velver Wheels, using the hand-tempered steel rivets in conjunction with our improved spoke, I overlooked setting a date for the expiration of my offer.

I am compelled to limit the time of this offer, as I find by referring to our files that we have received replies from all but six of the 25 parties to whom I made the special offer. Several of these people have made request for a complete set of wheels with the tempered rivets, and I am afraid our supply will run short.

Points to watch in writing sales letters

With this large number of requests for shipment I will be able to decide definitely the question which I wanted answered. I am now satisfied that it will pay us to use the hand-tempered rivets exclusively and increase our selling price enough to pay for the better material.

But in view of the fact that I failed to say anything about this time limit in my former letter, and as I do not wish to cut off any opportunity extended to you without giving you time to take advantage of it, I will agree to hold this offer open for you 15 days from the date of this letter, which should give you ample time to reply by mail.

Suiting the style to the purpose

However, rather than cause you to lose this opportunity on account of my oversight, you may wire us the order at our expense and I will see that it is entered for shipment before the expiration of the time set. I have asked my stenographer to enclose a telegraph blank which has been filled out for your convenience.

Perhaps this could be improved

I trust that I have explained fully my reason for writing you at this time, for, as I have stated above, I do not want you to feel that I am unreasonable in cutting off any advantage which I have extended to you. I would rather have you wire the order at our expense than cause you to lose this opportunity on account of my oversight.

To my way of looking at it, these paragraphs would have had a sounder ring if changed over to take an angle somewhat like this:

There's nothing unreasonable in this letter

You will remember I wrote you a short time back about using hand-tempered rivets in our wheels—I even sent you a sample of the hand rivets (the hand-tempered ones), and a sample of the soft rivets.

So many have accepted my offer to make up wheels with the hand-tempered rivets that I know there is a market for the hand-tempered product. Consumers evidently know the best when they see it and are willing to invest for long service.

I am going to fill the orders for wheels with the hand-tempered rivets at once, and keep right on making more. I want as many orders as possible to start in on. This gives you an unusual opportunity: if you will place an order within 15 days, I will fill it at the special price for which I offered to make up a few hand-tempered riveted wheels. Wire your order at my expense, if you like. Fifteen days before the dead line, however—no more.

An old idea but a good one

The last letter from the manager with the problem about rivets, mustered into service the apparently popular plot based on the discovery of a number of samples. As usual, the stockkeeper made the discovery. "Our stockkeeper has just called my attention to several pairs of wheels in standard sizes, which have been used for exhibition purposes."

This plot still appealed to me. But for the third time I felt that the most had not been made of it after I finished reading the letter. This paragraph in particular appeared to me to have an unsound ring:

This might leave room for doubt

There are only two pairs of these wheels in each of the standard sizes, and if the wheels on your engine are standard, which they undoubtedly are, this is a bargain for you.

Two pairs in each standard size would mean only about 32 pairs in all. It struck me as unusual that samples would be made in a full range of sizes and that an elaborate form letter would be sent out nationally to sell 32 pairs of wheels.

The order blank enclosed with this letter had "special sample wheels—see Mr. Gatler" printed over its face in red—all for a sale of only 32 pairs of wheels, according to what the letter would have you believe.

I have a feeling that other men who sell through the mails attempt to avoid arousing just such doubts. In this instance, a paragraph of this sort might have turned the trick:

This letter might have helped

We have 32 pairs of these sample wheels. I want to sell them quickly, so I am mailing out a regular form letter to our entire list about the proposition—therefore, you will have to act quickly. The special order blank enclosed will distinguish all orders from this mailing, so you need not bother to specify samples. It is strictly a case of first come, first served, as our samples always go fast.

In several additional sales letters which I have received lately I notice phrases that make the entire letters ring unsoundly to me. These letters are from real estate concerns, wholesalers, manufacturers, retailers, and others—in fact, from an unusually representative list. To my way of thinking, a good many of them fail to make the most of their opportunities because they use those little phrases with an unsatisfactory ring. Here are three typical phrases selected at random:

Little things that are important, too

*Why some
letters don't
"put it over"*

If you do not accept this special advertising offer—won't you please notify me immediately so I can make the offer to someone else in your territory?

Fearing that our former letter of last week did not reach you, we are writing again.

This letter contains a special and personal offer to you.

Now I may be all wrong. These letters which I have selected from among those I have received within the last few months may be winners.

Still I am simply reporting their effect on one consumer. I did not make any investigation—all the letters I have mentioned either came to me as a result of my natural interest in certain goods I thought of purchasing or because some concern used a mailing list that happened to contain my name.

So I think this is a rather fair test of how some letters in everyday use impress an average consumer. I am not saying that even a majority of the letters in use today ring the way those which I have selected do—but you might be surprised if I mentioned by name some of the houses from whose letters I have quoted.

Since it is admittedly difficult to sense every man's—every consumer's, I mean—reaction to a letter, a phrase or a paragraph, is it not worth the trouble to go over letters every now and then to make sure that they are making the most of their offers, ringing right all the time? We often acknowledge as a genius the man who writes a play with an interesting and realistic plot. Letters are demanding, more and more generally, plots both interesting and realistic. Why not test the work of the writers of letters as carefully as we are accustomed to test the work of the playwrights—and give them corresponding credit when they succeed?

About two years ago I received several letters from a concern which sells an encyclopedia. The uniform and distinctive complimentary close they used made a lasting impression on my mind.

Instead of "Yours truly," or "Very truly yours," they closed with this phrase: "Perpetually yours for

*One man's
analysis*

*This is adapt-
able in other
ways*

the Perfect Reference System." This was neatly typed in two short lines. The phrase stood out distinct from the rest of the letter, strengthening it and giving it a certain personality. These were not sales letters, but were concerned with a subject entirely foreign to selling.

Since then I have taken particular pains to notice how other men close their letters. I save most of the circular letters that come to my desk and study them with a good deal of care. From my collection I took 500 letters, each of which was a fair, even a good, example of written salesmanship.

I inventoried these letters and classified them according to the kinds of closers used. The following are the results I found:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 135, or 27%, closed with "Yours very truly" | <i>Only 12% saw the opportunity</i> |
| 60, or 12%, closed with "Sincerely yours" | |
| 54, or 11%, closed with "Yours truly" | |
| 54, or 11%, closed with "Cordially yours" | |
| 54, or 11%, closed with "Very truly yours" | |
| 26, or 5%, closed with "Yours respectfully" | |
| 21, or 4%, closed with "Respectfully yours" | |
| 21, or 4%, closed with "Yours sincerely" | |
| 5, or 1%, closed with "Your sincere friend" | |
| 5, or 1%, closed with "Very truly" | |
| 5, or 1%, closed with "Very sincerely yours" | |

In other words, out of five hundred letters, 440—or 88%—used the stock phrases when the same space might have been employed to deliver a lively message of service or good will, or to put across a trademark or slogan. Only 12% utilized the space to advantage.

Of those who employed the space to the best possible advantage, the following are perhaps some of the most interesting phrases used:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| "Yours for Tempting Typography": a printer. | <i>There's nothing stereotyped here</i> |
| "Yours for Less Ledger Labor": a manufacturer of an automobile ledger. | |
| "Advertisingly yours": an advertising man. | |
| "Yours at the Receiver": a grocer soliciting telephone orders. | |
| "Yours for Efficiency and Economy": an adding machine manufacturer. | |
| "Yours on the Jump": a real estate man. | |

An interesting classification

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*It's often the
last word that
counts*

"Yours for Clean Cylinders and a Fast Engine": a manufacturer of a device for removing carbon.

"Yours for Stickers that Stick": a manufacturer of gummed stickers.

I make it my business to read all the circular letters that come into my office. My purpose is to get an idea of how other men handle their correspondence, for I believe that I can often use their plans to good advantage to improve my own letters.

A point of special interest to me is the variety of the ways by means of which different men strive to get action. Usually, in the well-planned letters, the final paragraph is in the nature of a "clincher," the object of which is to sum up the proposition so convincingly that the reader will find it hard to say "no," or to put it aside for future consideration.

*Sales letters
that "clinch"*

Very often some of the most successful of these closing paragraphs leave nothing to the reader. They tell him specifically what to do, how to do it, and impress upon him that the time to do it is the present. Some writers, in order to get action, dwell upon the advantages lost by delay. Others offer inducements for immediate action. Some cut off retreat by making delay reflect back on the prospect. Perhaps, however, the most effective plan is the one that makes it so very easy to order that it is almost impossible to resist.

In the course of my study I have made a collection of some of the most interesting "closers" I have come across, and I will present a few of the most striking ones. Here, for instance, is the final paragraph from a letter that was sent to me by a Boston publisher, who wished me to order a book:

Send for it before you lay this letter aside. There's nothing to write—nothing to sign. It's all done for you. Simply put the enclosed card in the envelop, tuck in a \$2 bill or your check—and mail.

*All obstacles
are removed*

My immediate impulse was to follow the directions—because they were so simple and easy, and because I had been "sold" on the worth of the book in the previous paragraphs. Below is another "closer" where the same idea of making it easy to order is worked out. This letter

was sent to printers by a concern which has inks to sell. With the letter came several conveniently addressed postals—or “smear cards,” as they are sometimes called.

This might help to get the order

Right now, today, this very minute, perhaps you need a color for some special job. Grab one of the smear cards, put on that gob of ink, with a sample of the stock, and see how quickly and satisfactorily we will handle this trial order! You'll be more than gratified—you'll be delighted!

BETTER GET IT OFF IN THE VERY NEXT MAIL!

Here is still another concern's variation of the “make it easy to order” idea:

It isn't necessary to write a letter; just write across the face of this letter, “I accept this trial order,” sign your name and send the sheet back to us in the enclosed envelop.

Another interesting “closer”

And still again, the closing paragraph of a two-page letter, said to be one of the most effective ever mailed by a well-known concern in the East, reads as follows:

SEND YOUR \$2 FOR THIS BOOK TODAY! It is beautifully bound in silk, gold-leaf lettered, 232 pages, illustrated, mailed postage prepaid for this amount. DON'T WAIT—use pencil in filling out order blank if pen and ink are not handy. Remember, on the Great Clock of Time there's but ONE word: “NOW!”

Perhaps the homely suggestion about using a pencil is the most effective touch in this paragraph.

This little suggestion may work for you

Below are a few more “closers” that have seemed to me particularly good. They have—in every case—been taken from letters that pulled unusually well.

Why not mail this postal while the thought's fresh in your mind? Whirl round in your office chair and do it NOW -- 'tis a turn for the BETTER!

THE AUTOMATIC LETTER WRITER

*Paragraphs
that have
proved out*

Just wrap a dollar bill in this letter at our risk, and mail at once to be sure it will reach us by next Wednesday. Don't bother writing a letter; you may be busy. The address above will tell us that the remittance is from you.

*The point to
emphasize*

Don't let this letter become covered up on your desk. Attend to this matter now, or instruct your advertising agent to reserve space for you, and get a big bargain.

Here is the close of a letter, which is claimed to have brought a steady reply average of 45%:

An inquiry commits you to nothing, obligates you to nothing. The outcome of that inquiry may mean to you everything. Everything that makes life worth while—character, wealth, happiness.

Simply sign and return enclosed postal card. Today—NOW!

*These form
letters brought
the business*

A western collection agency sent out a series of four letters. Each letter was individually typewritten and signed and resulted in the collection of several thousand dollars. The first three ended, "Yours for a Live Wire Collection Service"; the fourth ended, "Persistently yours." Two of the "closers" used were as follows:

From every satisfied client I secure others, and for that reason, if for no other, you may be assured of an intelligent, conscientious service.

Send in your statements and let me get busy.

OUR PERSISTENCY plus YOUR BAD ACCOUNTS means DOLLARS for you.

Start 1919 with a clean sheet. The sooner you send US your accounts, the sooner we will send YOU a check, so

SEND YOUR ACCOUNTS TODAY.

PROVED METHODS THAT PAY

A middle-western printing concern has brought suggestions for the immediate use of the telephone as the means of transmitting orders into many of its "closers." Here are three samples:

How the telephone can help

Our evidence is all ready, our typesetters at attention, our pressmen alert, our telephone L-I-S-T-E-N-I-N-G !

When you take up the receiver and call our number, you're on the direct wire to lucrative printing that pays real dividends: MAIN 3600.

If you've a print-job hanging around, there's a phone at your elbow.

And Johnson's at the other end—

L-I-S-T-E-N-I-N-G.

A special inducement for immediate action is sometimes effective. The following, for instance, is a "closer" that offers such an inducement:

This plan often gets results

Just to hand you a bit of a bribe right on the face of it, I'll do THIS: If you'll reach right over, grab the pen and make that check payable to Henderson right now,

I'LL PUT YOU DOWN FOR 13 SETS INSTEAD OF 12 AT THE SAME PRICE!

Takes just a minute to fix the whole thing—THIS MINUTE will do.

A genuine argument can often be summed up into an effective "closer." The following example, for instance, is taken from a two-page follow-up letter used by a New York concern. The letter has to take the difficult position of asking for a \$15 remittance. But it pictures the benefits that may be derived from the expenditure in such a way that—by comparison—the sum seems small:

A novel way of requesting a remittance

*This idea might
be used in
other ways*

Now, think THIS; think it hard—think it harder than anything you ever thought in your life: You are preparing to increase your present income 10 to 20 times what it is this very minute by remitting \$15 to me by the next mail that leaves your city!

Make this move at ONCE, and in a very little while the daily stream of cash remittances will flock to you in every mail from cities, towns, and villages everywhere, your profits piling up and bringing you and yours all those new and wonderful, wanted, waited and wished-for luxuries of life, that priceless independence that enables you to bid your pay-check pals good-by forever.

Here is one that gets “under the skin” of the doubtful prospect by asking simply for questions instead of for an enrolment. It has a frank, friendly tone that immediately appeals to the prospective purchaser:

*An effective
closer*

I know what this course will mean to you. I know what it will qualify you to do. Perhaps you cannot see it now, but remember—70% of my best men—of my most enthusiastic pupils—were once on the fence in this matter just as you are today—70%, mind you—and every one is now a satisfied student. I am sure it will prove true in your case if you will make the start. Will you not do so, and do so now? At least write me and tell me frankly why it is you are hesitating.

A final word about “closers.” The man who writes letters cannot expect, of course, that a strong appeal in his final paragraph will win favorable action from a prospect solely on its own merits and in spite of faults in the rest of the letter. But he should recognize, on the other hand, that a poor “closer” may spoil an otherwise good letter. The purpose of the “closer” is to focus the prospect’s mind, while he still has the matter clearly in his thoughts, on the idea of doing at once what the writer of the letter wants him to do.

APPENDIX

REMEMBER

Remember that the policies and rules gathered together here are assembled merely to suggest to you how to build up your own office manual for stenographers and typists. Just work out your own office manual to fit your business with the aid of the ideas underlying the examples given here--the result may be three pages or three hundred--the size does not matter, but standardization does matter, and matters in concerns of all sizes and kinds.

In business generally there is nearly always some difficulty in getting those active in the work to see the advisability of describing completely its various steps. They themselves know them thoroughly, and ask: "What is the use of going to the trouble of putting it in writing?"

When, however, one of these human encyclopedias suddenly decides to seek his fortunes elsewhere, or otherwise lets go the reins, the need of a manual is usually keenly felt. One problem after another comes up, the proper disposal of which is in doubt. Often a bit of routine work will go forward for weeks or even months with an important part missing. And nowhere is the need for a standard practice more keenly felt than in the correspondence work.

For the benefit of all new employees, definite rules should be thoroughly understood and written in a style easy to read. Such a set of rules will help to avoid many misunderstandings.

INTRODUCTION

In almost every company there is great need for improvement in correspondence. One of the most valuable ways of correcting correspondence and training workers in the writing of letters which will be uniformly good is a standard correspondence manual.

Outlined on pages 278 to 293 is a sample manual. It is merely in skeleton form and may be enlarged upon, abbreviated, or copied exactly by the staff members, according to circumstances. In places where examples of the right and wrong way of writing letters are shown it is expected that all the staff members will, if possible, find such examples in the letters of the correspondents, which will tend to make the manual more personally applicable than it would be otherwise.

All correspondents should help in the further compilation of this manual.

There should be one copy of the manual for every person in the company who writes letters, or has to dictate letters. If the number is large, a good way is to mimeograph, while smaller numbers can be duplicated or made by the carbon process. The manual should be made in looseleaf form so that it can be added to, or corrected, very readily.

THE OFFICE MANUAL

THE POLICY OF THE COMPANY

We expect every correspondent to understand thoroughly, not only the letter, but the spirit of our policy. This policy is:

We aim to produce honest, well-made articles, to back these articles with our guarantee, to deal honestly, fairly, and courteously with our customers and, above all, render to them that service to which they are entitled.

We are judged by our letters. The percentage of customers who meet us face to face in our office is very small compared to those with whom we do business by correspondence.

The correspondent is at a disadvantage as compared with the salesman. If the salesman says something which he discovers by looking into the customer's eye is not being well received, he can immediately revise his remark and repair any possible damage that may have been done. The correspondent does not have this advantage. What he says on paper remains a permanent record. The impression that the customer gets when reading the letter is sometimes indelible.

For every letter you write the company must bear the responsibility. To the reader, you are the company. What you say may affect very seriously the customer's opinion of us. The more closely you follow our policy, the more you will increase our good will. The building of good will means more business and more business means larger opportunity.

Learn our policy. See that nothing you say in your letters is capable of a wrong conception.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Never forget that your letters represent this company. When you write a business letter you are the company. Be sure it is a good letter.

Never be discourteous. You can be concise without being brusk; brief without being short.

Don't "spread it on too thick" in an effort at politeness. Real courtesy is easily recognized; so is "soft soap."

Never be inaccurate. Question every statement you make, no matter how commonplace. If it is not exact, don't use it. Make accuracy a habit.

Remember that every really successful business is built on confidence; and confidence is based on honesty. Inexactness may differ from dishonesty, but it often works the same result.

Never be servile. We try to serve our customers, but in a dignified, self-respecting way.

Always try to make a friend of the person you are writing to. Friendliness makes confidence, and confidence makes sales. In one sense, therefore, all your letters are "sales" letters.

Try not to be self-conscious in letters. Cultivate the art of "talking" to your man. If you had him across the desk you could convince him; imagine him there when you dictate.

Always remember that many persons know us only through letters. They may think of us as an impersonal business organization--cold-blooded, unfriendly. Try to dispel

this feeling. Be as friendly as possible. Convince these people that we are interested in their business, ready to serve them, and eager to help them in making their business grow, or to see that they get the best value possible for their money.

THE READER

Do not handle the letters which come into your possession as so many pieces of paper to be disposed of summarily. Always remember that the letter is a representation of a person. Try to picture this person in your mind. See if you can produce a favorable impression upon the person that you have in your mind.

If the person writes us a scurrilous letter and loses his temper, do not think that you are improving the situation by rushing to the defense of the company and answering him in his own style. The aim of business letter writing is to produce good will and increase business. You cannot do this by quarreling, nor yet by an effort to "get even" with satirical remarks.

The tone of your letter should always be friendly and there should be no possibility of a misunderstanding. Choose your words, sentences, and paragraphs carefully. A letter must be clear, courteous, and concise. If it is conversational in tone, you will get your message home much more quickly than if you use a stereotyped, stilted form of writing.

CLEARNESS

If you do not know exactly what you are going to say, when you start to dictate a letter, do not say anything.

Don't write at all unless you have something to say; and having said it, stop.

Don't give reasons or explanations unless they are called for.

Don't write anything in a perfunctory way, but remember always that each letter or indorsement should bear the impress of the writer's dignity, courtesy, and intelligence.

Don't hesitate to say "no" if that is the proper answer; and having said it, don't attempt to suggest an alternative aimed to circumvent your own "no."

Don't discuss people; discuss things.

Don't write anything quarrelsome (it would probably not be signed).

Don't get excited; or if you do, don't record the fact on paper.

Don't use long words when they can be avoided (and they generally can).

Don't say "shall," or "must," or "should," if you mean "will"; "verbal" when you mean "oral"; "amount" when you mean "quantity"; "in reference" when you mean "with reference"; "in accord" when you mean "in accordance"; "hardly" when you mean "scarcely"; "with the view of" when you mean "with a view to."

The first principle in letter writing is to deliver your message. It is not enough that this message should get on the desk of the reader, nor is it sufficient to have it read. It must be understood at once.

To force a reader to study our letter in order to understand what is meant, is to add a burden which the reader should not have to carry. Misunderstanding ends in loss of business. Misunderstanding increases your work. To have to write several times on the same subject in order to make your meaning clear is a confession of inefficiency upon the part of the correspondent.

Avoid long sentences. Choose the moderately long sentences wherever it is possible.

The greatest writers use the simplest English. The simple words used in ordinary conversation are far better than the stereotyped phrases used in so-called "business English." Avoid slang, but do not hesitate to use the ordinary colloquial expression. The following examples will serve as a guide for the correspondent in the kind of writing he should avoid:

Mrs. T. expressed the opinion that most of the trouble has been due to piano having been delivered by not having been put in a box, claiming that the instrument being drawn by horses over a dusty road, for a distance of 17 miles, which more or less injured the instrument and the box would afford more suitable protection.

See how much better it would have been had the writer divided this long involved sentence into several small ones, as follows:

Mrs. T. says that most of the trouble has been due to the manner of delivery. The piano was not put in a box and it was drawn by horses over a dusty road for a distance of 17 miles. This, she says, more or less injured the instrument.

Another example:

You are fully protected under our written guarantee and in the event that the same has not been turned over to you, Mr. Anderson will be pleased to do so.

The words "the same" refer to a piano box mentioned in a previous paragraph. Without this explanation the above paragraph would have been entirely meaningless.
Another example:

We are in receipt of our Mr. George's recent call on you, at which time he took up the matter regarding the disposition of pianos in the various freight depots awaiting delivery, in which he informed us that you had promised to remove all of these instru-

ments within the next 30 days and will concentrate in the disposition of same accordingly.

The revision which follows, we think, is an improvement upon this paragraph:

Our Mr. George says that he discussed with you recently the disposition of the pianos now at the freight station in your city. He also says that you have promised to remove all of these instruments within the next 30 days and that you propose to concentrate upon the disposition of them.

In the following paragraph the writer complains of the customer's letter not being clear, and fails himself to make his letter clear:

Your letter is not quite clear as to whether your arrangement contemplates operating under the George Piano Company or starting out independently. If so, whether you have become established in a store and are carrying a stock of pianos on hand or intend selling from catalogs.

The words "if so" in the beginning of the second sentence should have been "if the latter." There is also no necessity of calling the reader's attention to the fact that he could not write clearly. It may prove a boomerang.

COURTESY

It is very important that the correspondent be courteous. Discourtesy injures business relations. Try to be sincere and direct. Under no circumstances should the correspondent try to be smart, or to get even with some individual who has written discourteously to us. It is also important that the writer remember that what may sound all right when spoken, may be interpreted entirely different by the reader. The following paragraph might not have been meant discourteously.

We have already explained to you the manner in which your orders are handled by us.

If this sentence is read aloud in an angry, positive tone, the effect is entirely changed.

Always avoid argument. One of the most common kind of arguments is that about missing letters. This is entirely unnecessary. When a customer claims he has not received a letter, you should assume that your previous letter must have gone astray and send him a copy of it. It saves a lot of time all around.

Avoid stock phrases and the use of superfluous words and expressions.

Never "beg"; do not "beg to acknowledge," or "beg to inquire."

Never use "advise" or "state" when "say" will do.

Never say "the same" or "same" when you mean "it."

Do not use "trust" when "hope" will serve better.

Do not omit the pronoun "I" or "we" as the subject of a verb; that is, do not say "answering your letter of May 17, have not had opportunity." Say "I have had no opportunity."

Never thank a man in advance. It is impossible.

Do not close a letter with "hoping," "trusting," and the like. Never say "we are, yours very truly," and so on. Omit "we are." State your business concisely. Then stop.

Never say "the writer"; use the pronoun "I." Be natural.

Don't say "your esteemed favor"; it is meaningless. "Your letter" is better.

Avoid expressions like "would say that," "wish to inform," and "want to say." You can write more clearly without them.

Don't use a long word where a short one will do as well. Avoid superlatives. Careless use of "very," "best," "great," "remarkable," and so on, has weakened many an otherwise forceful statement.

CONCISENESS

Never begin a letter until you know what you intend to say. This will help prevent the common mistake of writing long and involved sentences.

The effective letter is one which is concise and to the point. Needless words, worthless repetition and superfluous details are the chief enemies of conciseness. Avoid them. They add nothing to the clearness of a letter, but on the contrary, hinder it being readily understood. The ability to write concisely saves time in dictating, saves the operator's time in writing and the customer's time in reading. In order to write clearly and concisely, one must be able to think clearly and directly. The following examples show how it is possible to express an idea clearly and concisely:

DICTATED (118 words)

We regret that we will be unable to ship your car-load of pianos today as promised in our previous letter. We are experiencing a great deal of trouble with the railroad in the way of car shortage, and in this case we are very much disappointed in not having received the car ordered up to now.

We, however, have been promised definitely by the railroad that same will be set for us on Tuesday morning, September 4, and you may be assured that same will be loaded immediately upon arrival, and forwarded. We shall institute a tracer on said shipment in order to avoid further delay.

Regretting this unavoidable incident, we beg to remain with good wishes.

REVISION (76 words)

You, no doubt, are experiencing the same trouble that we are having, due to car shortage. It seems to be everywhere. In spite of all we could do, we haven't yet received a car for the shipment we promised in our last letter to make.

Today they have made us a definite promise to have a car ready Tuesday. If they keep their promise we will ship on that date and follow shipment with a tracer.

DICTATED (69 words)

Our factories advise us of having received one gold-plated arm and one set of piano keys bearing your name as shipper. Up to the present date we can locate no correspondence in our files covering the disposition, or reason for return of the above. Therefore, in order to facilitate prompt handling, will you kindly write us, giving the above requested instructions?

Thanking you for prompt attention, we remain.

REVISION (19 words)

You shipped us recently a gold-plated arm and one set of piano keys. Will you send us instructions?

DICTATED (273 words)

We are in receipt of your letter of August 31, with further reference to the adjustment of your player piano purchased from our Joliet store. We exceedingly regret the circumstances which prevented our player expert from adjusting the instrument on his previous visit to Morris. You undoubtedly appreciate that this is the busiest season of the year

at our factories and owing to the absence of several of our player men it was absolutely impossible to spare a man on the Monday stated, but we arranged to send him the following day.

We are pleased to advise, however, that we have made arrangements for a man to be in Morris next Tuesday, September 4. Meanwhile we ask your kind indulgence, expressing the hope that you will not be put to any inconvenience, occasioned by the delay, and desire to assure you that the instrument will be adjusted to your entire satisfaction.

We are interested in your complaint and will carry out the policy of our company to make you a satisfied customer.

We shall again take up the matter with Mr. Anderson concerning the piano box, venturing to state that delivery will be made at first opportunity.

You undoubtedly realize that this is an expensive proposition to make a special trip in a matter of this kind and ask that you bear with us until convenient to make delivery.

You are fully protected under our guarantee and in the event that the same has not been turned over to you, Mr. Anderson will be pleased to do so.

Thanking you for your cooperation and with kindest personal regards and good wishes, we remain,

REVISION (141 words)

You were no doubt annoyed that our player expert came to Morris on Tuesday instead of Monday, when you would have been in. The fact of the matter was we were so tied up with appointments for our men that we couldn't make it and we assumed, wrongly, as it happened, that you would be in Tuesday.

Another visit will be made on you Tuesday, September 4, and we hope to be more successful this time as we most certainly wish to get your piano in good order so you can use it.

About the piano box—we are arranging to have this delivered on the next trip we make in your direction, which we trust will be very shortly.

You know, Mrs. Tabler, our guarantee protects you, and in addition you can depend upon us to give our best service.

In writing concise letters, bear in mind that we must be courteous. Do not let your zeal carry you to the point where your letters are curt. Do not adopt the telegraphic style in writing. A letter can be so condensed that necessary information will be omitted. Aim to be concise.

"DON'TS" IN HANDLING INQUIRIES

Never delay answering inquiries; make acknowledgments the same day the letters are received.

Don't put off answering the difficult letters. Run through your mail, pick out the hard ones, and answer them first.

Don't hesitate to get special information, if necessary. Be sure you get it straight..

Don't delay reply because the information asked for is not immediately obtainable. Write a letter saying that the information is being looked up, or that the inquiry has been referred to the proper person or department; then be sure that it has been so referred.

Never answer an inquiry without studying the questions carefully. Lack of care may require several letters for correction. Also, it creates a bad impression.

Never write a letter saying that you do not know what a question means. If there are several possible interpretations of the question, answer them all.

Never start a letter by questioning the complainant's statements.

Don't antagonize the person you write to. If you are going to do a favor, or make a concession, do it first. Argue afterward.

Don't seek our advantage against the other man; seek his advantage against us. That stimulates us to do our best.

Never be abrupt. Be courteous, sympathetic, and generous when handling complaints.

Never try to dodge a mistake of your own. Admit it frankly; then avoid repetition.

HOW TO BEGIN A LETTER

Do not fall into the habit of beginning a letter with some stereotyped phrase. This is extremely important in sales letters, but it is almost as important in a letter for which the customer is anxiously waiting.

The practice of using a formal opening for all letters is bad. Suppose all the stories in a magazine opened in the same way—how many would you read? Remember you must get your reader interested with the opener—therefore make it interesting.

Below are a few old-fashioned openers:

In accordance with your letter of August 28
In response to your recent request for information
Your valued order of the 28th received
In further reference to your letter of August 2,
concerning
Your communication bearing no date

We are in receipt of your kind favor of recent date
and in reply beg to state
We have before us your letter of August 28

Always start your letter with the subject that the reader is most interested in. If necessary to identify the date of the customer's letter, make this merely incidental. Do not waste a lot of words in getting to the point. Get to it at once. Then you get your reader into the letter without waste of time.

Here are some good openers:

Thank you for your letter of
We are glad to learn from your letter of
The impression we get from your letter of
We are sorry to learn
We know just how you felt when you wrote us
We feel you are justified in your complaint
The reason you did not receive
We are sending to you today

WRONG SENTENCES

Often a sentence will be written which at first seems correct, but after it is reread, a double meaning develops. This is the most common error in speaking. Sometimes these errors are costly, but more often merely ridiculous.

The material embodied in its construction, finish, and tonal qualities is unexcelled.

NOTE:—There can be no material in a tonal quality.

Trusting that our wire has reached you promptly with good wishes.

NOTE:—Were the "good wishes" attached to the wire?

Regretting that we are not in a position to offer you our regular line with good wishes, we remain.

NOTE:—Are they selling "good wishes"?

SOME WORDS TO AVOID

DO NOT SAY	WHEN YOU MEAN
Awful	Serious
Accept	Except
Access	Excess
Affect	Effect
Among	Between
Amount	Number
Badly	Very much
Balance	Remainder or Rest
Beg	(Don't use it)
Can	May
Capacity	Ability
Convince	Persuade
Credible	Creditable
Execute	Fill
Expect	Suspect
Farther	Further
If	Whether
Learn	Teach
Lie	Lay
Party	Person
Practical	Practicable
Per	By
Proper	Correct
Some	It or They
Shall	Will
Sit	Set
Via	By
Want	Wish or Desire
Was	Were
Which	That or Who
Yourselves	You

HOW TO END A LETTER

Ending a letter well is as important as beginning it well. When you write an ending that—on the face of it—is formal, you add useless words and subtract a very valuable quality. Suppose you called on a customer—talked interestingly to him for a while—got him all

keyed up—and then said "Anticipating your kind reply at an early date, we remain"—and backed out. Would you be a good salesman? No. A good salesman would get the name of the customer "on the dotted line." Your letters should end with the end of the subject matter unless you wish to clinch the argument by a final statement or question.

Here are a few of the common "closers" found in our letters:

With kindest regards, we are
With good wishes
With good wishes for a large fall trade
Meanwhile, with good wishes we remain

—and so on. This sort of a sentence attached to a Christmas greeting is perhaps all right, but absolutely meaningless at the end of a letter.

Some other correspondents have the habit of using the participle ending, such as "Thanking you for." There is one good reason why our correspondents should not use such endings: there are so many thousands of other people doing it that we would not be noticed. We do not wish to do the useless things because others do them.

Here are a few examples:

Thanking you in advance for your prompt and favorable consideration of the above and looking forward with pleasure to serving you for your requirements, we are

Trusting that you will find conditions throughout Kansas favorable and that your sojourn in Kansas City will not spoil you for the balance of the trip, venturing the hope that you have called on Mr. W., extending to him our kindest regards, we remain

Just imagine yourself backing out of your customer's store uttering that kind of "blarney."

Trusting that business conditions are favorable
in your locality and with good wishes, we beg to
remain

This writer got several objectionable things in one
ending—"Trusting," "With good wishes," and "We beg to
remain."

We have no occasion to beg anything of our customers and
we do not like to have our correspondents do it for us.

Trusting
Assuring
Thanking
Hoping

These are bad closers—avoid the use of them.

Here are some better closers:

Please decide as to what will accommodate you best
and let us hear from you promptly

We shall expect to hear from you by the 20th

If you decide to accept our proposition, write us
at once

Do you think you can afford to let this opportunity
slip by?

If there is any point in our letter that is not
clear, will you please write us again?

We will notify you promptly if there are any new
developments.

STANDARD PRACTICE INSTRUCTIONS FOR CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT

The duties of the correspondence department, summed up briefly, are to aid in the sale of our product; to increase the sale of supplies; to satisfy complaints.

These are the three big outstanding factors that govern and control the correspondence division. It is a sales department first and above all. Not only are the letters addressed to a customer before he has planned his order, but subsequent sales letters of advice, help, encouragement, and so forth, are contributing factors in our selling campaign. Hence no other department can so influence the sales and ultimate success of the business as the correspondence.

HOW THE CUSTOMER FEELS ABOUT US

A customer who goes to the trouble of writing us a letter has a perfect right to expect several things. He expects all his questions will be answered; he does not want a perfunctory answer, but a whole-hearted, thorough and complete one. Most important of all, perhaps, he looks for a prompt answer. He was interested to the point of sitting down and writing us a long letter; he hasn't forgotten the time he spent in writing this letter; it is on his mind and will continue to be on his mind until our reply reaches him; and the quicker our reply reaches him, the better is the opinion he will have of us and our business.

PARAGRAPHS AND FORM LETTERS

Among the first duties of the correspondent, or anyone aspiring to become a correspondent, is to become thor-

oughly familiar with the use and application of our paragraphs and form letters. There are in use at present over 400 paragraphs and about 60 form letters. Revisions are constantly being made. Notices of changes and alterations are sent through to the correspondence and stenographic departments from time to time by the chief correspondent. Correspondents must mark any changes that are suggested, keeping their sets up to date at all times, in order to minimize errors and misunderstandings.

DUTIES OF STENOGRAPHERS AND TYPISTS

We require of stenographers and typists correctness and neatness first of all; then uniformity of letters. In order that letters written for our company may be alike and uniform, stenographers and typists will carefully study and follow the instructions in this manual. It is to the stenographers' interest to immediately become acquainted with the rules governing the stenographic department, because infractions of the rules governing the ways of writing our letters will be charged against the bonus, deductions being made for errors, erasures, irregularities of salutations, closing, misspelling, and so on.

ERASURES

Nothing detracts so much from the general appearance of a letter as erasures. The world's speediest operators turn out work practically free from erasures, and it is just as easy to strike the right key as the wrong one. Anything in a letter that detracts from its neatness leaves a bad impression. And nothing influences a customer or a prospective customer against us so much as a letter having erasures, especially if they are untidily made.

TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS

Typographical errors include misspelled words, misplaced and incorrect punctuation, and so on. As fully 90% of

the letters written by the stenographic department are composed of form letters or paragraphs, there should be no excuse for typographical errors of any kind. Our standard paragraphs are correctly spelled and punctuated and no deviation from them is allowed. A misspelled word in a paragraph can show only one thing--carelessness—and suitable deductions will be made for such errors. The manager of the stenographic department expects to keep every stenographer and typist supplied with a clean, legible set of paragraphs. Since they are in constant use, however, certain paragraphs are bound to become frayed, soiled, and illegible, and the typist must report such conditions if they exist in her particular paragraph book. New paragraphs can easily be obtained from the duplicator department and it requires merely a report from the stenographer to the department manager to secure them.

THE TYPEWRITERS

The same caution applies to the typewriters. If there is any irregularity in the machine, if it appears out of order, if the spacer does not work perfectly, the keys jumble, the alignment seems irregular, the ribbon does not feed properly, or if there is anything else out of order, it must be reported promptly to the department manager.

SALUTATIONS

If the one addressed is a man, the salutation should be "Dear Sir"; if a woman, the salutation should be "Dear Madam." If it is impossible to determine whether the addressee is a man or a woman, the salutation should be "Dear Friend." The heading of every letter should be made according to this form:

Mr. John Jones
148 Jenkins St.
Kenosha, Wis.

Dear Sir:

PARAGRAPHING

Every paragraph should be started at Figure 20 on the standard scale, or 10 spaces from the left-hand margin of the letter.

A carbon copy of every dictated letter is made and retained in our files. Stenographers must be careful to keep their supply of carbon paper in good order. All carbon copies must be legible and any changes made on the original letter must also be made on the carbon copy.

IDENTIFYING LETTERS

Stenographers and typists will always put in the lower left-hand corner of the letter their own initials and also the number of the correspondent marking the letter. Thus, if correspondent No. 15 has marked the letter and stenographer ML has written it, the identification marks in the lower left-hand corner of the letter will read

ML-15

The same applies to the dictated mail, except that the dictator's initials are used instead of a number, and placed first; thus AR-ML means that AR dictated and ML transcribed and wrote the letter.

ENCLOSURES

Immediately below the correspondent's number and the typist's initials, the enclosures are marked. As checkers make all the enclosures from these directions, it necessarily follows that if typists fail to indicate the enclosures, the enclosures will not be made. This will be counted as an error against the typist.

STOCK RECORDS

All stock, stationery, printed booklets, circulars, order blanks, and so forth, are given a symbol number, which is placed somewhere in an inconspicuous place on

each piece of printed matter when it is practical to do so. The symbol number is entered in the stock record book, which is a looseleaf binder; when a new piece of printed matter is given a symbol, it is filed alphabetically in the book. Besides the symbol number a short explanation of its use and purpose is given on the same page, also the date on which the form was last ordered or printed, the amount, and so on. As all orders for supplies and stationery pass through the planning department, deductions are made. It is the duty of the planning department to keep a careful record of all supplies and as soon as a previously determined "low level" has been reached, a report must be made so that a new supply may be ordered.

The heads of departments making orders for supplies, stationery, and so forth, submit their orders to the planning department once a day. After the entry has been made in the stock-record book, the planning department sends the orders to the stock room to be filled.

HANDLING INVOICES AND STATEMENTS

All invoices must be checked and put through promptly. If our invoices are not paid when they are due, it hurts our credit standing, and we are likely to lose the discount for payment within a certain time unless the invoices are sent through to the cashier in time to pay them before the discount date.

Before an invoice is passed, it is necessary for us to have a proper record of the goods received and of their satisfactory quality. We should also keep a record of invoices passed so that we will not pass two invoices for the same goods.

The following routine is established for handling and checking all invoices, and must be observed by everyone concerned:

1. Since the purchasing department alone is authorized to buy goods, all invoices received are sent to

that department direct from the mail-opening department. Sometimes invoices are delivered with the goods or sent in by messenger, in which case also they must be sent direct to the purchasing department and not to any individual in the office, unless the bill is made out to an individual and not to the firm.

2. The purchasing department should, of course, have a purchase record for checking every invoice received.

3. If the purchasing department has not the purchase record with which to check the invoice, it will hold the invoice and ask the department, or the individual who may have bought the goods, for a requisition. In such cases, the purchasing department will also suggest that in the future no goods are to be ordered for the firm except through the purchasing department. Where it is necessary, the purchasing department should also instruct dealers not to deliver goods except on a regular order. This means that the purchasing department will hold all unchecked invoices until they are checked, and so far as possible will be responsible for either checking them from its own records, or getting the proper information about invoices which are not recorded.

4. The purchasing department should not allow any unchecked invoices to go out of its department. If a case should arise where a memorandum cannot be sent, and it is necessary for the invoice to be sent out of the department, a proper record must be kept and followed up in two days.

5. The purchasing department will check the invoices against the purchase record in this way:

(1) Each invoice must be made self-explanatory so that it can be properly charged. Wherever possible a sample of the goods bought should be

attached to the invoice by the purchasing department.

(2) Put the bill stamp on the invoice.

(3) Check the bill stamp as "ordered," "received," "quality and price," "terms," and "charged to." The accounting department cannot handle the invoice until it has been so checked.

6. The purchasing department must date the invoices and initial them.

7. From the purchasing department the invoices go to the accounting department, where all extensions and additions are verified, the discount deducted and the charge number checked to see that it is correct.

8. The accounting department then passes the invoices to the proper individuals for approval, and is held responsible for the prompt return of all invoices, keeping necessary memoranda to see that all bills distributed for approval are returned. It is imperative that this policy be followed.

9. In making this distribution the schedule given on the next page is to be used.

10. The individuals approving invoices for payment must date and initial them.

11. After the invoices have been approved and returned, the accounting department detaches and destroys the samples attached to the bills, or if the samples are valuable sends them to the supply room. All bills from the same firm are then fastened together and a summary attached.

12. After the accounting department has registered the invoices on the invoice register, they are sent to the auditor for final approval and then to the cashier for payment.

A SCHEDULE FOR THE APPROVAL OF INVOICES AND VOUCHERS

All invoices and vouchers (including branches and factories) must be approved in accordance with the following schedule:

FOR THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS	FOR AMOUNTS UP TO \$50 to \$200	FOR AMOUNTS FROM \$50	FOR AMOUNTS OVER \$200
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NEW YORK OFFICE

Selling	R.E.G. or L.P.	J.K.F.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Advertising	R.M.T.	W.H.A.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Administrative			
General Office	A.W. or S.B.H.	J.K.F.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Accounting	B.P.R. or S.B.H.		R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Credit and Collection	M.C. or S.B.H.		R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Stock and Shipping	J.O.	J.K.F.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Repair and Exchange	E.W.	J.K.F.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.

HOME OFFICE

Selling	R.M.T.	W.H.A.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Advertising	R.M.T.	W.H.A.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Administrative			
General Office	A.W. or S.B.H.	J.K.F.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Accounting	B.P.R. or S.B.H.		R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Credit and Collection	M.C. or S.B.H.		R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Stock and Shipping	A.R.	A.R.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.
Factory Bills	M.C.O. or F.P.K.	M.C.O.	R.H.D. or S.A.D.

All vouchers must be approved before being registered. When necessary the final approval of R.H.D. or S.A.D may be obtained after registry or payment. The amount limits apply to individual items and not to group totals. All such individual items must be approved before being grouped.

All vouchers and invoices must be checked by the auditor before payment. This rule does not apply to petty cash vouchers for amounts under \$5.

13. The invoices for all accounts settled monthly are held in the accounting department until the end of the month, when the invoices for the entire month are entered on the register at the same time, as one item.

14. The cashier will take care of the payment of the invoices sent her, mark them with the "PAID" stamp after checks are drawn, and send them through to the file. The file clerk must be careful not to file any invoices unless they bear the "PAID" stamp.

15. All invoices must go through the above routine with as much dispatch as possible. The purchasing department should pass the invoices through in about two days and they should not be held by individuals longer than one day. If the accounting department finds that invoices are held up unduly by an individual, this fact should be reported to the auditor.

INVOICES NOT RECEIVED

When the purchasing department has a receiving record for goods for which it has no invoice, it will write for the invoice to the firm sending the goods. If an invoice is received and the purchasing department has no record of the receipt of the goods, it will write for an explanation to the firm sending the invoice.

STATEMENTS

All statements are sent direct to the cashier. Any missing invoices which the cashier is not holding should be inquired for in the purchasing department, because this is the only department which may hold any unchecked invoices except those on the way from the purchasing department to the cashier. If the purchasing department is not holding any of the unchecked invoices mentioned on the statement, it will return the statement to the cashier with a note as to whether or not it checked any bills corresponding with the statement items, and if so, the date such bills were checked.

ASKING FOR DUPLICATE INVOICES

Duplicate invoices should be written for only when absolutely necessary. If possible, we want always to find the original bill; if it is necessary to write for the duplicate bills, some part of this system of handling and checking the invoices is not operating according to schedule.

The accounting department is to see that the instructions here outlined for handling invoices shall be carried out in all respects.

MAILING DEPARTMENT

OUTGOING MAIL

All outgoing mail is to be delivered to the mailing department and the mail clerk must see that the letters are enclosed in the proper envelops, sealed, stamped, and forwarded to the post office.

SAVING POSTAGE

In order to reduce the amount of postage to a minimum, this department has a classifier in which all the letters addressed to the same person are kept together during the day and mailed in one envelop at the close of the day's business.

REQUISITIONS FOR STAMPS

When additional stamps or stamped envelops are required, the mailing clerk will fill out a form promptly and send it to the treasurer's department. Order in small quantities and as often as necessary; at no time shall a large stock of stamps be kept in the division.

HOW TO FOLD LETTERS

In folding a letter to go into an ordinary envelop, do not fold the bottom of the sheet even with the top, but

fold it about a quarter of an inch below the top. This makes it much easier to open the letter.

The exact time of the departure of mail trains must, of course, be known. The postal rules also should be thoroughly understood, especially with respect to the classifications of mail matter and rates of postage, both domestic and foreign.

Acknowledgments of general orders and notices of shipments should not be mailed unless received from the stenographic department in specially marked envelopes.

WINDOW ENVELOPS

Window envelops should be used wherever possible. For enclosing, carefully follow the instructions shown on the following page.

The mail clerk is absolutely forbidden to sell postage stamps or stamped envelops to the employees. These can be purchased in the treasurer's department during the regular office hours.

USE OF SPECIAL MAILING PERMITS

Where two thousand or more identical pieces of our literature are to be mailed, a special permit will be used instead of postage stamps. The permit number and the amount of postage are to be stamped on each piece, and the total amount paid by voucher.

HOURS OF THE MAIL CLERK

The mail clerk will report for duty at 8:45 a.m. except one day each week, when she reports at 1 p.m. She will remain each evening until all the mail has been sealed, stamped and forwarded to the post office. From 5 o'clock until the mail is all put up, she has the assistance of one office boy. On Saturday afternoon the mail clerk remains until all the mail has been sent to the post office. Correspondents or stenographers working

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOLDING WINDOW ENVELOPS

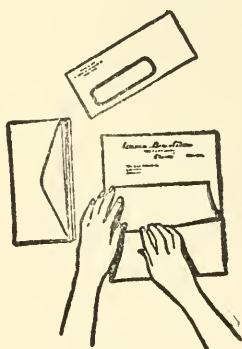


FIGURE 1

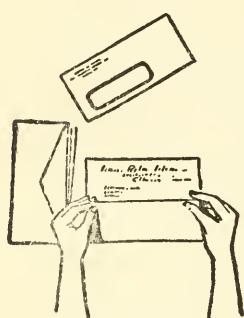


FIGURE 2

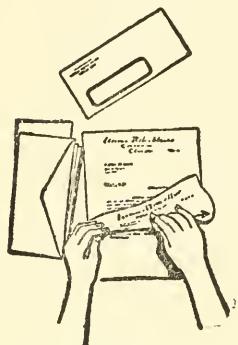


FIGURE 3

Fold bottom over to top of salutation as shown in Figure 1; this marks line where second fold is to be made.

Pick up letter as described by Figure 2, holding firmly with left hand while making fold with right, moving hand from left to right as indicated by arrow in Figure 3.

Hold letter in same position with left hand while grasping under edge with right (see Figure 4). Then turn address side down preparatory to placing in envelop.

Envelops should be placed face downward alongside of pile of letters, with flaps next to letters as shown in illustrations. Insert enclosure as in Figure 5.

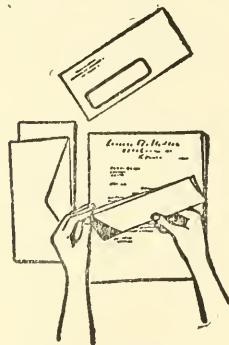


FIGURE 4

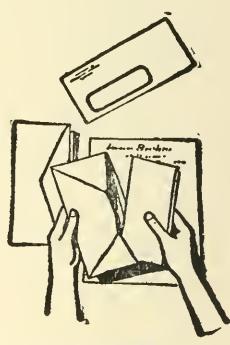


FIGURE 5

Saturday afternoons will notify the floor office boy or the mail clerk when the mail is all in, so that the mail clerk may be relieved and not unnecessarily detained. His time is as valuable to him as yours is to you.

STATIONERY AND SUPPLIES

A requisition for ordinary stationery or office supplies should not exceed a month's requirements. If an excess requisition comes in, the stationery department should make an inquiry or else reduce the quantity ordered. In filling requisitions, the stationery department has the privilege of changing the quantities ordered, if necessary to conform to the size of the original pad or package. Requisitions should be confined to our standard supplies. Special brands are expensive and unnecessary. We now have our standards well established and materials suitable for the work in hand are available at all times.

CHANGING OLD FORMS OR MAKING NEW ONES

A request to change an existing form or to print a new one should be made to the stationery purchaser after it has been approved by the head of the department. This request should be attached to a copy of the form desired, and the stationery purchaser should be informed what forms, if any, will be replaced, and for what the new form is to be used, whether it is for a temporary record, and whether it is to be written on with ink, lead pencil, or typewriter. The stationery purchaser will assign a new form number, if necessary, and pass the request to the assistant to the general manager for his approval.

The following questions should be carefully considered when requesting a new form: Is the form contemplated absolutely necessary? Is the expense involved in printing and in using justified by the value of the information given? Will the result secured be actually utilized?

KEEPING SUFFICIENT SUPPLIES ON HAND

The stationery department will keep all forms in stock in sufficient quantity to allow the time necessary for their replacement, and each department will be notified promptly when the minimum quantity on any form has been reached. It is only necessary for each department to fill in this form and return it to the stationery department as soon as possible, to guard against the form being exhausted.

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